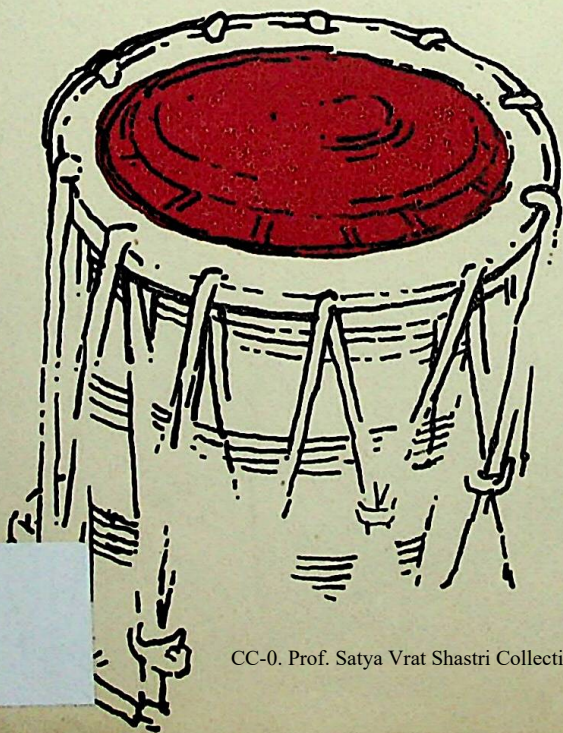


SANSKRIT DRAMAS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY

USHA SATYAVRAT



Sanskrit drama has a hoary antiquity. It goes back to more than two thousand years and is responsible for giving the world literature some of its master-pieces. In the present century it represents the latest link in the chain of its development. This link is the result of the cumulative efforts of a large number of Sanskrit playwrights from all parts of India. The author takes up this for her study in the present volume. The plays taken up by her represent some of the very best in contemporary Indian literature.

People in general, including some Sanskritists, are not aware of the vast extent of the twentieth century dramatic literature in Sanskrit. The value of the present work lies in bringing it into bold relief. This work, *the first of its kind*, is a long overdue *puspanjali* to the large number of Sanskrit playwrights, known, and unknown, who have enriched Sanskrit dramatic literature by their valuable works. It was not possible to notice this vast literature in one single volume. The author has therefore planned a series of volume on it, the present one being the first among them. In it are taken up for a detailed study from all points of view fifty one plays. The author approaches her subject with a thinking and a sensitive mind and brings to bear on it a critic's incisiveness mellowed by warmth of appreciative spirit.

Rs. 65

SANSKRIT DRAMAS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Sanskrit Dramas Of The Twentieth Century

Volume 1

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Sole distributors
MEHARCHAND LACHHMANDAS
Oriental & Foreign Booksellers & Publishers
DARYAGANJ, DELHI (INDIA)

© Usha Satyavrat

First Edition : 1971

Price : Rs. 65.00

Printed at Śaktiputra Mudraṇālaya, 10-B, East Avenue Market,
Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-26 and published by Usha Satyavrat,
'Surabhi', 3/54, Roop Nagar, Delhi-7

To
my dear son
Sharat Chandra
whose knowledge of Sanskrit at the young age of 11
is the pride of the family

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Preface

CHOICE OF SUBJECT

The present work represents substantially the thesis that I had prepared in early January 1965 for the Ph. D. degree of the University of Delhi. It took me some five years of hard labour to complete and submit it. The year 1960 had just dawned when Dr. N. N. Choudhuri, the then Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit in the University of Delhi, asked me to work on the Twentieth Century Sanskrit Dramas for my Ph. D. thesis. That time I had no clear idea of the number, size and the literary value of these dramas. Still the subject caught my fancy, for one thing, it was new and as yet untouched, for the other, it enkindled in me the hope of walking into pastures anew. The topic approved, I started my work on it.

COLLECTION OF MATERIAL

My first problem was to get at the dramas very few-only a handful - of which were available with local booksellers. I did not know as to how I could acquire them. Dr. Choudhuri gave me a few. For the rest I had to begin a search which proved as the most fascinating experience of my life. I had some very valuable tips from the professors of modern Indian languages in this University. They supplied me with the addresses of some of the Sanskrit playwrights they knew of in their respective provinces. Then there was the ever-helping Dr. Raghavan who not only supplied me with the copies of his own plays but sent his personal copies of the plays written by others and readily gave all the help I needed.

LIMITING THE NUMBER OF PLAYS

With all the information pouring in I discovered that the number of the Sanskrit dramas would be inordinately large. I knew that I would not be able to include them in single volume. Several volumes will be required to critically notice this entire class of literature. *The present volume may therefore be seen as the first among the series of many such volumes on the subject.*

While dealing with the dramas I have taken one precaution. I have tried within the framework of the available material to give a complete study of some of the authors like Dr. V. Raghavan, Sri Y. Mahalinga Sastri,

Mahāmahopādhyāya Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa, Sri Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik, Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhatta Mathura Nath Shastri (except his Śaṅkaravijayam which could not be had) and Sri Nirpaje Bhima Bhatt. The only exceptions are Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri and Sri S. B. Velankar some of whose works have come to me only recently and will be included in the second volume along with the other authors as the study of Modern Sanskrit Drama is now a passion of my life. I shall continue my work on the same till the last ounce of energy is left in me.

PLAN OF WORK

Before taking up the work I evolved a plan in my mind. I decided that I should take up each drama as a unit in itself. First of all I should say a few words about the author, the place and the year of the publication of his work under study and its peculiarity, if any. After this should come the plot followed by characterization and critical appreciation which should include the evaluation of the language, style and the dramatic art of the work studied. I have followed this uniform pattern for my study with the difference that wherever an author had written more than one play of a particular class the combined critical appreciation is given at the end of the latest of his plays. For fear of the work becoming unwieldy I have included only the important characters in the present study.

The plays have been grouped topic-wise. In each group the arrangement is generally based on the alphabetical order of the names of the authors. If however a writer has written more than one play of a particular group all these plays are studied together in the chronological order of their publication. Farces have been treated as a separate category as they have been treated all along the Indian tradition. All those plays which are explicitly stated or implicitly found to be farces have been included in this grouping though on the basis of the theme they could well have been included in other groups.

BREVITY AND CONCISENESS : THE PRIME CONSIDERATIONS

The need for brevity and precision has been there before me all the time. I have tried to be as compact and to the point as was possible within the limitations of my study. While judging this work one thing should be kept in view, viz., *it is not a study of a work or a number of works but a whole literature.* From the plan of the work as given above it should be clear that whatever I have done is on the side of the minimum. I

could not have been briefer. The whole work would then have given the appearance of being sketchy and ill done. It could well be urged here that I could have reduced the bulk of the work by omitting the plots of some plays based upon the Epics and the Purāṇas. But that was neither practical nor desirable. For one thing, the number of such plays is not much - there are only about a score of them - and the reduction in the bulk by omitting their plots would not have been appreciable - and for the other the plots as given by the playwrights differ materially from their versions as found in the Epics and the Purāṇas or the history books and so could not be omitted on the plea that they are well known. Again, to give the plots of a large number of plays and to omit those of a few of them would have violated the symmetry which it was not desirable to sacrifice for the doubtful gain of saving a score or two of pages.

WORTH AND UTILITY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PLAYS

Now a word here on the criticism of those who look upon the twentieth century Sanskrit plays or, for that matter, the entire twentieth century Sanskrit literature, as something inconsequential. With their minds occupied with older writers they refuse to appreciate its weight and importance. To them I would humbly submit that they should better leave their prejudices behind and approach the modern Sanskrit literature with a receptive mind. Once they do so there is no reason why they should not respond to its greatness. Creativity or originality is not the monopoly of any particular age. A literature does not lose its importance or greatness because it is written in a particular period of time. Modern Sanskrit literature has enough in it to interest any objective connoisseur. In its volume, content and presentation it can easily match some of the best pieces in world literature.

The primary purpose of drama is to entertain. Judged by this criterion modern Sanskrit drama comes out eminently successful. Most of the plays dealt with here have been staged, some of them more than once, and found stageworthy. This again is an answer to the criticism of those who believe that Sanskrit stage is extinct. There are several well-organized Sanskrit dramatic clubs like those of the Prācyavāṇī of Calcutta, the Brahman Sabha of Bombay, the Samskrita Ranga of Madras which offer presentations of Sanskrit plays, both ancient and modern. Sanskrit dramas still enjoy considerable popularity in the country and draw packed houses, whenever and wherever they are staged.

TRANSLITERATION AND PRINTING

The standard symbols for transliteration have been employed in the work. Generally (with a few exceptions; there could be no hard and fast rule for it) the pattern followed about the diacritical marks with regard to the proper names is that in the proper names occurring in epics and mythology they have been used while in the historical or others (like Pratapsingh, Shivaji) they have been avoided.

All necessary efforts have been put in to detect printing mistakes and set them right. Still a few might have escaped notice. For this I request the indulgence of scholars.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the end it is my most pleasant duty to thank Dr. N. N. Choudhuri, former Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit, University of Delhi, who ushered me into this most captivating of the realms of literature and my father-in-law, the great Sanskrit savant, Pandit Charu Deva Shastri who wholeheartedly blessed my efforts. I also thank my husband - supervisor Professor Satya Vrat Shastri who inspired me to carry on this work undaunted. Dr. Miss K. K. Gorowara Principal, Modern College for Women, New Delhi, deserves my gratitude for always encouraging me in my studies and researches. Sri S. Balu Rao of the Sahitya Akademi, the ever-helpful friend of the family, deserves my hearty thanks for giving a form and shape to the work from the point of view of printing and giving his valuable counsel and guidance with regard to its external appearance. Shri Jagadish Lal Shastri ensured its correctness by reading through the proofs and offering valuable suggestions. The keen personal interest that he took all through the work was in the Press was really touching. I therefore owe him a deep sense of gratitude. The Press too was cooperative on the whole in spite of the difficult nature of the work and did not take more than ten months to bring it out. For this commendable job Shri Chiranjiva Shastri, the proprietor of the Press, the Śaktiputra Mudra-nālaya and his devoted band of workers deserve my hearty thanks. I also take this opportunity of placing on record my high sense of appreciation of the help received from a number of known and unknown scholars whose kindness and generosity will ever remain a shining example of the innate goodness of the human mind.

June 21, 1971

USHA SATYAVRAT

Introduction

NEW TRENDS AND TENDENCIES

Sanskrit drama goes to a hoary past. It has an uninterrupted history of more than two thousand years. How it came into being nobody knows. Its origin is very much shrouded in mystery. There are various theories in the field including the traditional one of its creation by Brahmā as recorded in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the first extant Sanskrit treatise on dramaturgy, but none of them singly satisfactorily explains its origin. Be that as it may, Sanskrit drama came to stay in India much earlier than the birth of Christ and has had an unbroken history. It has given us masterpieces in the works of Bhāsa, Kālidāsa, Śūdraka, Bhavabhūti, to mention only a few of the great names. The modern Sanskrit drama or the drama in the twentieth century is the latest of the links in the chain of the development of the mighty Sanskrit drama.

In its close-up view Sanskrit drama upto the present century falls into a pattern. It is seen to follow certain well-defined dramaturgical conventions codified by the ancient sage Bharata and gives the appearance of something very much stereotyped so far as language, expression and technique are concerned. But of late, the Sanskrit playwright has ventured to come out of his shell and is beginning to give us a drama which breathes fresh spirit. A new wind of change is beginning to sweep over the Sanskrit world where a break with the past is clearly discernible. The twentieth century Sanskrit playwright living in and working in the modern scientific and technological age is well disposed to making experiments and introducing certain changes in his plays in keeping with the demands of the age. There are clearly certain trends and tendencies in it which point to Sanskrit drama shedding off its rigidity of exterior and developing a pliability which goes well with a class of literature which is growing and developing, incorporating into it many changes and yet maintaining a continuity with the past. Sanskrit drama remains no longer psychological or spiritual; it is turning, though slowly, into social, ethical and intellectual. It no longer represents the mind in repose;

it is venturing also to represent the mind in action. It no longer maintains an ideal isolation; it has started coming closer to society in its trials and tribulations, joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations. It is endeavouring now to reflect, perfunctorily though, the renaissance in Indian society, the rebirth of a nation.

ABSENCE OF PRAKRITS

Bharata lays down the use of Prakrits in a play by certain characters like women, jester, menials etc. This was when Prakrits were spoken and understood along with Sanskrit. Sanskrit playwrights in obedience to this rule made Prakrits an essential and inseparable part of their plays even long after Prakrits had ceased to be effective media of expression. Sanskrit continued to be patronized by people (though their number was not very large) while Prakrits were forgotten and had become unintelligible. Of late a tendency is visible in Sanskrit drama either to avoid Prakrits or to replace them with modern vernaculars¹ As an example we may mention the *Bhūbhāroddharaṇam*² where Mathura Prasad Dikshit puts Hindi in place of Prakrits. In another of his plays the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam*³ he uses Newari (the language of Nepal) instead. In the *Pāṇinīyanāṭakam*,⁴ recently come to our notice, Gopalashastri Darśana Kesari employs Bhojpuri in place of Prakrits.

CHANGES IN EXPRESSION

With regard to expression too there is a tendency to shed off puritanism and incorporate certain foreign words either by Sanskritizing them or

1. It seems to have had its beginning sometime in the medieval age when songs in Sanskrit plays could be found in contemporary vernaculars along with Sanskrit and Prakrit verses and prose. Recently discovered *Pārijāta-haraṇanāṭakam* of Umapati Upadhyaya and *Dhūrtasamāgama* of Jyotirīśvar Thakur both of the fourteenth century and the *Paraśurāma-vijayaḥ* of Kapilendradeva and *Goraṅga-vijayaḥ* of Vidyapati both of the fifteenth century are a case in point. The occurrence of an *Apabhraṃsa* song in one of the manuscripts of the *Vikramorvaśīya* of Kālidāsa regarded by many as a later addition also has its importance in this context. The staging of the Sanskrit plays in Kerala under the name of *Kootiyāṭam* has the peculiarity in the explanation in Malayalam by the actor of the matter in Sanskrit play in Sanskrit and Prakrit in between their presentations (see *Sanskrit Ranga Annual Madras*, 1961).

2. Published by the author, Sampat 2016.

3. Published by the author (available from Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi),

4. Chowkhamba Vidya Bhawan, Varanasi, 1964.

otherwise. It is not uncommon to find in modern Sanskrit plays such English words as badminton, tennis, police, radio, station, bus etc.

CHANGES IN TECHNIQUE

In technique too some Sanskrit dramas present a break with the past. Like the western dramas the acts have now come to be divided into scenes. As examples we may mention the works of J. B. Chaudhuri. The Nāndī and the Bharatavākyam, once an indispensable part of a drama, have now come to be discarded. A new trend is now visible which considers Prastāvanā as something superfluous. The Sanskrit stage is slowly progressing from its old elaborate form to a new simplified look. It is not an uncommon sight to see Sanskrit plays performed in the open air or under a pergola or the shade of a tree.

On account of the increasing preoccupations of the modern age the playwrights in all languages are inclined to write shorter plays, especially one act plays, to entertain the audience. The Sanskritist too is not unaffected by this tendency. The one act plays, once non-existent in Sanskrit or very rare, have become more frequent. Radio plays too have come to be written and broadcast over the various stations of the All India Radio. The shadow plays like Chāyāśākuntalam¹ by J. T. Parikh have also made their appearance.

The credit for introducing western style operas on the Sanskrit scene goes to the indefatigable Dr. Raghavan, the famous author of a number of works. His Rāsālilā,² Prekṣaṇakatravī,³ Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ,⁴ Kāmaśuddhiḥ⁵ and Vimuktiḥ⁶ can easily go down as landmarks in the field of Sanskrit plays.

NEW THEMES

Gone are the days when a Sanskritist looked to the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata or the Purāṇas only for his themes. With his creative intellect freed from the shackles of tradition by the very force of the age he is constantly in quest of newer and newer themes and has no dearth of

1. Published by the author, Surat, 1957.
2. From the Samskrita Ranga Annual, Madras, 1963.
3. Published by the author, Madras, 1956.
4. From the Samskrita Ranga Annual, 1959.
5. The Samskrita Ranga Annual, Madras, 1963.
6. Sanskrit Pratibha, New Delhi, Vol. IV, No. 2, 1964.

them when he casts a floating glance at the vast canvas of history. There is a growing tendency among Sanskrit scholars to adopt the burning problems of the day as their themes with the result that we have come to have such plays as *Kāsmīrasandhānasamudiyamah*¹ and *Hyderābādavijayam*² by the Andhra scholar Nīrpaje Bhima Bhatt on the problems of Kashmir and Hyderabad respectively as also *Mahimamayabhāratam*,³ a play on the irrigation policy of India by the Calcutta scholar J. B. Chaudhuri. On the social problem of dowry we have a beautiful play *Vidhiviparyāsam*⁴ by the West Bengal scholar Srijiva Nyāyatīrtha, a prolific writer, the well known author of about twenty plays in Sanskrit all of which have had the honour of being staged, some of them even twice or thrice. The periodic news in the newspapers about the change of sex too has tickled the imagination of the Sanskrit playwright. We have on this topic a few very interesting plays like *Sānavatam*⁵ by the Banaras scholar Ambikadatta Vyāsa, *Puruṣaramaṇīyam*⁶ by Srijiva Nyāyatīrtha referred to above and *Śṛṅgāranārādīyam*⁶ by the Madras scholar Y. Mahalinga Sastri. In *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam*⁷ we have a complete history of India from the coming of the East India Company down to the attainment of independence in 1947. Further we have *Parīṇāmah*,⁸ a tragedy in contravention of the rules of Bharata. Written by the Nepal Raj Pandit Chudanath Bhattarai, it has a very illuminating discussion on the philosophy of such Western stalwarts as Kant and Hegel, as also on Communism, Socialism, Democracy and Humanism showing the author's intimate knowledge of the various systems, eastern and western.

SONGS

Of late Sanskrit playwrights have shown an increasing tendency of going in for songs in their plays.⁹ In older plays a verse here or a verse there would

1. *Amṛtavāṇī*, Bangalore, Vol. XIII, 1954.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Pracyavani Sanskrit Series*, Vol. XXXI, Calcutta, 1961.
4. Published by *Pañcānana Smṛtigranthamālā*, Bengal Era, 1356.
5. Published by Krishna Kumar Vyas, Vyasa Pustakalaya, Banaras, 1947.
6. Published by the author, Sahitya Chandrasala, Tiruvalangadu (Tanjore), 1956.
7. Referred to earlier.
8. Published by Nutanshri, 8-315, Pyukhatol, Kathmandu, Nepal, Samvat 2016.
9. It seems to have had its beginning in the medieval age when a particular type of dramatic compositions called *Sanḡitakas*, first mentioned in the *Ubhayaḅhisārikā* of Vararuci, made their appearance. These abounded, as is clear from their very name, in songs and music.

be sung but now in some plays we have lengthy songs which are not unoften accompanied by an indication of the *rāgas* in which they are to be sung. Thus we have come to have musical dramas like the *Saṅgītasaubhadram*¹ and *Kālidāśacaritam*² by the famous Maharashtrian scholar Velankar. The Baroda scholar Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik in his three historical plays *Samyogitāsvayaṃvaram*,³ *Chatrapatisāmrājyam*⁴ and *Pratāpavijayam*,⁵ has given the technical details about his songs; their *tāla*, *sthāyī* and *antarā*, their notes etc. at the end. In his *Rāsālilā* the great musicologist Dr. Raghavan has deftly woven into his verses the names of the *rāgas* in which the verses are to be sung while the directions also precede them. In the *Parivartanam*⁶ Kapila Deva Dwivedi has modelled his songs in language as well as on the mode of singing on the songs of the famous *Gītagovinda* of Jayadeva. J. B. Chaudhuri's plays abound in songs of devotion which in character and form approach very nearly the *stotras* of old.

A novelty in songs in Sanskrit plays lies in the occurrence in them of some special type of songs such as a marshal song as in Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik's *Chatrapatisāmrājyam*⁷ or a fishermen's song as in Vaṅgīyapratāpam⁸ or a Bhils' song as in the same author's *Mivārapratāpam*.⁹

Quite a few of the songs appearing in Sanskrit plays are in free style; they are, most of them, *muktakas* and are not like other verses which have one or the other metre. The *muktaka* style poetry, it may be pointed out, is comparatively of recent origin. It gained more popularity in the vernaculars. Its increasing use in Sanskrit is therefore very interesting.

CONCLUSION

Thus we see the opening up of the new horizons on the field of Sanskrit dramatics. There are trends and tendencies in it which point to its bright future. Some of these may yet be in a nebulous stage. Still they are very much there. If allowed to grow they are sure to bring new dimensions to the already great Sanskrit drama.

1. Girvanasudha Prakashana, Bombay, 1961.
2. Ibid.
3. Published by the author, 1928.
4. Published by the author, 1929.
5. Published by the author, 1931.
6. Published by the author, Lucknow, Saṃvat 2008 (1952).
7. Fourth act, p. 61, (P. 170 of this book).
8. Third act, p. 32. (P. 103 of this book).
9. First act, p. 15. (P. 104 of this book).

Biographical Plays

Electrical Engineering

Mahāprabhuharidāsam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Mahāprabhuharidāsam* is written by J. B. Chaudhuri. It has seven acts and eighty pages. It is published from Calcutta in 1960.

PLOT

First Act—After the prologue Haridāsa is shown in deep meditation. Rama Chandra Khan, a wealthy land-owner of Vanagrāma (Bengal), dislikes Haridāsa. His far-spreading fame is an anathema to him. He sends Lakṣahīrā the famous beauty of his times to Haridāsa to lead him astray. Lakṣahīrā comes to him. She tries her best for three nights and days to cast her spell on him but Haridāsa does not fall into the trap. He is spiritually so powerful that Lakṣahīrā herself feels uplifted in his company and is transformed into a pious woman. She becomes his disciple. After this Haridāsa leaves that place and asks Lakṣahīrā to stay behind and propagate the sacred name of Hari.

Second Act—Haridāsa is eagerly awaited by the people of Saptagrāma (Bengal). They all want to hear his melodious *Saṅkīrtana*. When he reaches the place all the people assembled there welcome him. He beautifully explains that the recitation of the name of Hari is not supposed to bring salvation but only devotion to Lord. When a Pandit asks him why he recites the *mantra* loudly while the scriptures enjoin its muttering silently, Haridāsa says that man or nature is purified not only by actually reciting the name; listening to it too leads to purification. Haridāsa recites the Harināma loudly so that other persons may also be benefited. Gopāla Cakravartī, one of his opponents, is furious at this. He even insults him but Haridāsa is generous enough and forgives him.

On the other hand Raghunātha, a young man, is deeply influenced by Haridāsa and takes to Vairāgya. His mother is very much upset at his inclination for renunciation. She informs her husband Govardhanadāsa, a very rich man, about his son's tendencies for Vairāgya. Though Govardhanadāsa and his wife desire that their son should be a worldly man, their daughter-in-law is of the firm opinion that it is a great boon to be a Vairāgi.

At last the will of the daughter-in-law prevails. Both Govardhanadāsa and his wife praise the daughter-in-law for treasuring such a noble feeling.

Third Act—Haridāsa has begun to touch great heights in spiritualism. Some people feel jealous of him. They sarcastically discuss about his spiritual power. Dambhapati Bhaumika is one of them. He thinks that what Hari has done anybody can do. Vākyaavāgiśa, a greedy man, agrees to pose as Haridāsa but when he is faced with reality he flees to safety. By now Haridāsa has taken great strides on to the path of spiritualism. Sometimes he laughs, at other times he cries, at still other times he sings and dances in ecstasy. His activities become an eyesore to Mohammedans. Garai Kazi, the ruler of Phulia—Shantipura, orders his arrest. Rahim and Karim, two constables come and put him in chains. He is brought to prison but there too he is happy as ever and utters the name of Hari and also asks his other prison-mates to do so. His constant uttering of the name of Hari infuriates the royal officers and they beat him mercilessly. They tell him to adopt Islam but Haridāsa prefers death to conversion. When royal officers cannot kill him by beating they decide to end his life by throwing him into the Ganges.

Fourth Act—Haridāsa, along with Advaitaprabhu is shown dancing and singing the praises of the Lord in ecstasy. Finally both of them go to the Gaṅgā to take bath at the time of the lunar eclipse.

Haridāsa goes to Kuīlnagrāma to meet Mālādhara Vasu, the writer of *Śrī Kṛṣṇavijayagrantha*. There he meets his son Satyarāja. They discuss about the significance of the recitation of the name of the Lord.

Fifth Act—Haridāsa realises the truth that Mahāprabhu takes upon himself all the injuries of his devotees when he sees the marks of flogging on the back of the Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu tells him that he is Rāma himself and he (Haridāsa) is Hanumat. Having come to know of this Haridāsa falls into an ecstatic swoon. Mahāprabhu is very much pleased at his humility and permits him to ask for a boon. He does not ask for anything. His only desire is that 'like a street dog he may always be able to get the leavings of the devotees of God.'

Haridāsa and Nityānanda sing and propagate the name of Hari in the streets of Navadvīpa by moving from one place to another. Muslims cannot tolerate this and as a result Jagai and Madhai, the Muslim Kotwals, under the influence of liquor attack and beat Haridāsa and Nityānanda. Nityānanda is a faithful friend and devotee of Haridāsa. He wants to save the

life of Haridāsa and sends him to Mahāprabhu under some pretext. Though he saves Haridāsa he cannot save himself from the fury of one of the Kotwals who strikes him on the head. Nityānanda is badly injured. Mahāprabhu when he comes to know of the ghastly act of the Muslim Kotwals is on the point of punishing them but Nityānanda intercedes on their behalf and asks for forgiveness.

To turn more and more people devotees of God, Mahāprabhu, Advaitaprabhu and Śrīvāsa together with Haridāsa stage a play. Haridāsa plays the role of the *Vaikuṇṭhapurīrakṣaka*, Śrīvāsa of Nārada, Mahāprabhu of Rādhā, the Ādyā Śakti. All the spectators are highly impressed by the drama.

Chand Kazi, a Muslim, looks with disfavour at the activities of the Mahāprabhu. But when Mahāprabhu himself leads a huge procession of Kīrtana to his house, Chand Kazi is so much impressed by the spiritual power of Haridāsa that he himself becomes the devotee of God and a disciple of Haridāsa.

Jagādānandā, a friend and companion of Haridāsa, informs Śacīmātā (mother of Haridāsa) that her son is leading a spiritual life. Śacīmātā is very happy at this. Viṣṇupriyā, the wife of Haridāsa, faints when she hears about her husband. She regains when her friends sing the name of the Lord loudly. Later Haridāsa himself comes to his mother and seeks her permission to leave for Puri.

Sixth Act—Haridāsa leaves for Puri. He prostrates in front of the temple of Jagannātha. But he thinks himself of lower caste and as a result stays out. Mahāprabhu knows the spiritual heights of Haridāsa. He himself comes and embraces him (Haridāsa). Further he tells him that he (Haridāsa) would live near his own place. His meals would also reach him from his place. This makes Haridāsa tremendously happy.

At Puri Haridāsa meets Sanātana, a devotee of the Lord. Both indulge in mutual praise. Each says that the other is more devoted to the Lord.

Mahāprabhu and Haridāsa discuss about the problem of salvation. Mahāprabhu says that God loves those who deserve mercy.

Seventh Act—Haridāsa is worried because he cannot recite the name of the Lord for as many times as he first used to do. He has become old. Not much energy is left in him now. He does not even take the Mahāprasāda in full. When Mahāprabhu comes to know of this he feels very much worried. He himself comes to enquire about his health and tells him that he should take extra care of his health. Haridāsa frankly tells him that

by deliberately neglecting his health he is hastening his end so that he may quit the world before the Mahāprabhu. He cannot even think of living without the Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu is deeply touched by his words. He remains silent; he cannot turn down the wish of his devotee.

The last day of the life of Haridāsa. Svarūpagosvāmin asks the disciples and admirers of Haridāsa not to shed tears at his fast approaching end. Haridāsa says that in his last moments he would like to have the Mahāprabhu with him.

After Haridāsa's death, Mahāprabhu feels very sad and lonely. He sits in the front door of the temple of Jagannātha and begs people to perform Haridāsa's last rites. He tells them in a feelingful tone that though Haridāsa has gone to the place of eternal rest yet he is very much with them. Haridāsa has become immortal. His recitals of the holy name would echo and re-echo in the world for centuries. After this the Bhakta-cāraṇa Kavi sings the praises of the Lord and the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Haridāsa—As is clear from the theme the drama depicts the life of Śrī Haridāsa, how he managed to clear all the obstacles and win over all the enemies to reach his goal. Lakṣahīrā, a court beauty, who comes to lead Haridāsa astray is herself transformed into a pious woman and becomes his disciple. Here is an example of a man winning the whole world by a strong spiritual power. Haridāsa thinks that *bhakti* is more desirable than even *mukti*. He wants that a large number of people should be benefited from listening to the name of the Lord. That is why he says :

गोविन्दस्य नाम उच्चैः कीर्त्यते चेत् तन्नामश्रवणात् प्राणिमात्रमेव उद्धारं लभते । आत्मन
उपकाराय मनसा नामजपः, सर्वेषां प्राणिनामुपकाराय उच्चैः हरिनामकीर्तनम् । नृजाति
विना द्व्यक्षरं हरिनाम अन्ये प्राणिनः कर्तुं न शक्नुवन्ति तस्मात्तेषां श्रवणेनैव महापुण्यम् ।
परोपकारी आत्मकल्याणकर्तुं गंरीयानिति न कश्चन सन्देहः ।¹

"If the name of Govinda is uttered loudly, each and every being is benefited by listening to it. For one's personal benefit the *Name* may be repeated mentally but for the benefit of all it is to be repeated loudly. With the exception of human beings no other living beings can utter the bisyllabic word Hari. They therefore are benefited by merely listening to it. There is no doubt that one who does good to

1. Second act, p. 13.

others is better than the one who does good (only) to himself."

The Lord always helps his devotees. Muslim Kotwals are wonderstruck when they see that though Haridāsa is physically very weak he is not at all harmed by their cruel beating. They plan to kill him by throwing him into the Gaṅgā but before this spiritual giant all their efforts come to naught. Haridāsa feels no pain and loudly recites the Harināma. The Mahāprabhu tells him that he took on him all the beating : "He would not allow his devotees to suffer," says he.

One great quality which is characteristic of all the devotees of the Lord is excessive humility which is a prerequisite to saintliness. Haridāsa has this quality in abundance :—

हरिदासः—(प्रभुमुद्दिश्य) पितः विश्वम्भर भुवनवल्लभ ! एनं पातकिनं प्रति कृपा ते परममहती । निगुणोऽधमाधमोऽहं सर्वजातिबहिष्कृतश्च—त्वच्चरितवर्णने कथं समर्थो भवेयम् । पतितपावनस्य ते कृपाया माहात्म्यं कथं वा वर्णयामि । प्रभो एतत् एव तव महामाहात्म्यं यच्चरणाश्रितं न त्वं कदापि त्यजसि ।¹

Haridāsa—(addressing the Lord) O father, the sustainer and the darling of the Universe, your kindness to this sinner is very great. I have no qualities, I am the wretchedest among the wretched. I am excommunicated from all castes. How can I, therefore, be able to describe you or the glory of kindness of yourself, who purifies the fallen. My lord, it is your great magnanimity that you do not forsake him who has taken refuge in your feet.

1. Fifth act, p. 44.

Bhāratahṛdayāravindam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Bhāratahṛdayāravindam* is written by J. B. Chaudhuri. It was composed in 1959 and was staged for the first time at Shri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. It has five acts and fiftyfour pages and is published from the Pracyavani, Calcutta in the year 1960.

PLOT

First act—After Nāndī, the Sūtradhāra tells the Naṭī that Bengal and South have good relations with each other. That is why the Bengali party has come to enact the play in Pondicherry.

In the act proper, Aravinda is shown sitting in Cambridge in his office of 'Lotus Dagger' which is secretly run by his own self. He has declined to accept the degree of I.C.S. because his ultimate aim is to free his motherland. He loves all the literatures of the world, still he has the firm belief that the Indian literature and culture are superior to other literatures and cultures. Meanwhile Morāpantha Joshi comes and shows his concern over the membership of the Committee which is rather small but Aravinda says that it is all to the good. It is only with a few members that it can make good progress. He also discloses to him the aim of the Committee which is to free the Motherland from the yoke of the foreigners. After Joshi leaves, Vinaya Bhushan, the younger brother of Aravinda, asks him as to whether he has got any letter from his father and whether he has sent him any money. Aravinda indifferently answers that he does not expect anything from anybody. Everything that he gets, he thinks, is due to the blessings of the Almighty. Only the will of the Omnipresent prevails. He has surrendered everything to God. The only thing which is uppermost in his mind is the freedom of his motherland. He is bent upon seeing India free. To live out of India is like banishment which will end, says he, after five years.

Second Act—Aravinda teaches Agnimantra to Varindra for the *svātantryayajña*. The ceremony of initiation (*dīkṣā*) is similar to the initiation in any other sacrifice. Aravinda puts Gītā in his one hand and

sword in the other. The sword is the material by which he has to fight the war of independence and the Gītā is the spiritual power by which he has to learn to withstand every obstacle that comes his way. The highest aim of the man who has got the *dīkṣā* is to free his motherland. After the *dīkṣā*, Aravinda blesses Varindra and gives him his good wishes for the success in his mission.

Third act—Aravinda, Tilaka and other leaders are present at Surat on the occasion of the famous Congress Session of 1907. Due to differences between the moderates and the extremists that session ends in a fiasco. The leaders differ with each other with regard to the Chairmanship of the session. The extremists want Lala Lajpat Rai while the Moderates want Rash Behari Ghosh to preside over the session. Aravinda, however, remains calm and composed. He tries to pacify both the factions.

Fourth act—At the time Aravinda fights the battle of freedom the country is passing through a very delicate period. The Britishers resort to repressive measures at the slightest provocation. The Indians, however, are slowly coming to their own and their feelings begin to find expression in one way or the other. The entire British administration is upset at the murder of two English women and the Manikatolla Bomb case. Aravinda is put under arrest as a suspect. Kregan, the police Superintendent and Vinod, a C.I.D. employee come to arrest him but as he is sitting in his Navashakti office and is dressed shabbily both mistake him for a servant. They however soon come to know that the shabbily dressed man before them is no other than Aravinda himself. Kregan insults Aravinda for his disloyalty to England though he had his education there. Suspicious by nature Kregan goes to the extent of taking the sacred ashes from a temple (which Aravinda's wife had collected) to be some dangerous powder used in preparing bombs. Kregan and Vinod try to arrest Aravinda and handcuff him but one Bhupendranath tells them that if they do so there would be a flare up in the country which would make things difficult for them. They should therefore show Aravinda due courtesies even while effecting his arrest. These words do have their effect on the officers with the result that Aravinda is taken prisoner without handcuffs. Arrangements are underway to try Aravinda. Norton and Chittaranjan Das are the prosecution and the defence counsels respectively. Beachcroft, a classfellow of Aravinda, is the judge who has to try the case. Beachcroft allows Aravinda to state his own case. Aravinda calmly and quietly says

that he has done no wrong. All his acts are motivated by the sense of patriotism. If patriotism is a crime then surely he has committed that crime and he is prepared to suffer any punishment for that. Norton, who has filed a case against Aravinda, produces a postcard written in Bengali in which Varindra had written to him (Aravinda) to send some bombs (sweets) for him. The whole thing becomes clear when Aravinda says that in Bengali bomb means sweets and not any explosive. Chittaranjan Das further gives a turn to this case in favour of Aravinda when he says that the postcard is neither dated nor does it bear the seal of any post office. Chittaranjan Das says that Aravinda is a great patriot of his time. Beachcroft too feels likewise. He also feels that the only aim of Aravinda is to make his countrymen happy and that he has no idea of starting any agitation or laying any conspiracy. Aravinda is exonerated of all the charges. Still he is shadowed by two police constables.

Aravinda meets sister Niveditā. She cautions him to take care of himself, otherwise police would arrest him and if he is arrested the whole country would react violently. She further suggests that he should go to France where there would be no fear of his arrest. At her request Aravinda writes paper in Vande Mātaram to clarify his position to the general masses. Saralā Ghoshal, a co-worker of sister Niveditā, also requests him not to indulge in such activities as may lead to his arrest.

Fifth act—In 1914 Aravinda meets mother Mīrā. Mīrā tells him that she had dreamt of him and that she has seen him now face to face in Pondicherry. She asks him many spiritual questions which Aravinda satisfactorily answers. He wants to leave the political field and step into the spiritual one. He thinks that there can be no political progress without spiritual strength. Chittaranjan Das persuades him to come back to the political arena and accept the Presidentship of the Swarajya party but Aravinda is firm in his decision. He (Aravinda) tells him that India would surely get freedom when the time comes and that he would continue to help the cause of freedom from time to time but from now on his main aim would be to enlighten the world about spiritualism.

On the 15th August when India obtains freedom Aravinda sends his freedom message to the whole of the country wherein he says that the freedom has come on the 15th of August, his birthday. It is not just a coincidence. It only shows that Aravinda was born to free India from the bondage of foreigners. His birth had the only and the ultimate aim of

freeing his country. He firmly believed that independence could be obtained by spiritual means and not by political groupings. Mother Mīrā is very happy to know India's independence. To celebrate the event she hoists the tricolour on Aravinda's house. After this all the devotees and patriots sing a song in praise of mother India and with this the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Aravinda—He is a living and shining example of spiritualism. He strives hard for the freedom of his country. But the path he chooses for it is not political but spiritual. He himself tells mother Mīrā.

दृशा किल विलोकितं मया सुचिराद् ध्यानगभीरया शुभे ।

नहि शाश्वत-दिव्यजीवनादपरं ननु करणीयमस्ति मे ॥¹

"I have carefully thought out that I have nothing to do except to lead a spiritual life."

Aravinda sacrifices everything for his country. He wants his country to progress in every way. When the case is filed against him he faces the situation boldly and fearlessly.

किन्तु तत्त्वतो मया किं कृतम् ? पाश्चात्यराजनीतिमूलतत्त्वानि परिगृह्य तैः सह वेदान्त-स्यामरशिक्षायाः कृतः समन्वयः । प्राच्यपाश्चात्यसमन्वयमूलक आदर्शो देशस्य हिताय प्रचारितः । एतत्प्रचारणमेव मम जीवनव्रतम् ।²

"But in reality what have I done ? I took up the fundamentals of Western Policy and combined them with Vedāntic knowledge. I have propagated the ideal of the combination of the Eastern and the Western (systems) for the good of the country. To spread this is the only firm resolve of my life."

There is no place for worry in his life. The will of the Almighty is everything for him. He surrenders everything to Him. When his elder brother Vināyabhūṣaṇa asks him whether their father has sent him any money he calmly says :

नह्यग्रज ! मद्दृष्टये काचन चिन्ता न करणीया । भगवानेव दाता ग्रहीता च, जगति सर्वमेव तदभिलाषानुसारि । पश्य—

अचिन्तितं क्वचिदुपैति चिन्तितमपि नश्यति पश्यतोऽप्यस्य ।

नरस्य किं स्वातन्त्र्यं जयतीह भागवती करुणा ॥³

"No, my elder brother you should not worry for me. He is the giver

1. First act, p. 46.

2. Fourth act, p. 31.

3. First act, p. 8.

and He is the recipient. Everything takes place according to His desire. Whatever was not even thought of takes place and what was expected comes to be destroyed even in one's very presence. What freedom is there for man ? In this world it is the mercy of the Lord that is supreme."

Aravinda always bows before the will of the Almighty. He firmly believes that the origin and the destruction of the world is automatic.

क्वचित् क्वचित् सृजति विनाशमात्मनः

स्वयं जगत् प्रतिविधिरत्र को भवेत् ।

न पक्वमं सुपरिहरं क्रियाफलं

न यत्नतस्तदपि विराम ईप्सितः ॥¹

"The world brings about its own destruction every now and then ; what could be the remedy for it ? The fruit of actions when ripe is inescapable ; yet cessation of it with effort is what is not to be desired."

1. Fifth act, p. 47.

Saktisāradam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Śaktisāradam* is written by J. B. Chaudhuri. It deals with the life of the great mother Sārādāmaṇi, the wife of Shri Ramakrishna. The drama was for the first time staged in Puri under the auspices of the All India Sanskrit Conference at the Durga Bari on the 20th June, 1958, on the occasion of All India Sanskrit Literary Conference held during the *Ratha Yātrā* Festival. After that it has been staged all over India many times and has elicited praise at the hands of critics. It has five acts and 51 pages and is published from Pracyavani, Calcutta, in the year 1960.

PLOT

First act—Ramachandra Mukhopadhyaya, father-in-law of Sri Ramakrishna, brings his daughter Sārādā to him (Ramakrishna). Sārādā is not feeling well. Still she cannot restrain herself when she hears some rumours about her husband that he does not behave normally. Sārādā and Ramakrishna meet each other after four years. Ramakrishna reminds Sārādā of what he had told her four years ago. Sārādā remembers each and every word of Ramakrishna. This gives him immense joy. He inquires from her as to whether she has come to drag him to the worldly life, to which she says that she can never do so for she is his companion in *dharma* and therefore can never become an obstruction to his pursuit of it.

Second act—On the Phalahārīṇī Kālīpūjā day the Paramahansa worships Sārādāmaṇi as the mother Goddess, the Ādyā Śakti, and offers her all his Sādhana.

Third act—Once Sārādāmaṇi falls into the hands of the dacoit Kalubagdi after she becomes separated from her companions on her way to Dakshinesvara from Jairamvati. On being addressed father even the cruel dacoit is filled with paternal affection. He and his wife treat her as their daughter and give her shelter for the night. Due to contact with Sārādāmaṇi all the sins of the dacoit are washed away.

Fourth act—Hridaya, the sister's son of the Paramahansa, is a very wicked man. He uses harsh words for Sārādāmaṇi and insults her when the

wooden planks meant for hut are washed away by the waters of the Gaṅgā. Chandramāṇi, the mother of the Paramahansa, cannot tolerate her daughter-in-law being insulted and scolds Hridaya. Even the Paramahansa himself has come to look upon Sārādāmaṇi as the mother Goddess. He feels that it may be easy to propitiate any other deity if he or she may be angry but if this deity becomes angry then nobody can protect him.

This act consists of a number of scenes some of which describe the condition of Indian society which had come under the influence of Western civilization. The Britishers of those days were exciting the Indians' baser passions.

Fifth act—Many a time in his life the Paramahansa had the opportunity of being offered money by the people but he never accepted it. The Marwari Seth Lakshmi Narayan offers a huge sum of Rs. 10000 to him but he declines to accept it, saying that he does not need it. When the Seth offers it to Sārādā she too declines it on the ground that she cannot accept a thing repudiated by her husband. Busy in his meditation the Paramahansa lives on the banks of the Gaṅgā in Dakshinesvara where he discloses to his devotees like Kesavachandra Sen, Girish Ghosh, Narendra, Balaram Vasu and Pratap Chandra Majumdar his deep and abiding faith in the mother Goddess and the worship of the Supreme Lord in the form of a child and tells them that Sārādāmaṇi keeps an eye on all her devotees through a hole in the bamboo door. All the devotees pay their obeisance to the mother and are highly delighted by the music of Narendra.

The Paramahansa is suffering from throat cancer. In spite of this he sings in praise of the Mother. His wife Sārādāmaṇi restrains him from doing so and tells him that he himself is the incarnation of the Supreme Lord and if he so desires he can get rid of this dreadful disease but the Paramahansa says that no harm can come to a son if he sings in praise of the Mother. He cannot act against the wishes of the Mother. If the Mother so desires his throat cancer would be automatically cured. When just before his death (*Mahātirodhāna*) Sārādāmaṇi begins to cry like an ordinary woman he consoles her by saying that she should not do so for she is Mother herself and that she has to do what he had been doing all his life. Sārādāmaṇi controls herself and requests the Paramahansa to give her his last message. Paramahansa repeats that she has to carry on his work. She peacefully listens to this. After this the Paramahansa is filled with divine happiness and sings a song in praise of the Mother and both of them, the

Paramahansa and his wife, go into deep Samādhi.

CHARACTERIZATION

Sāradāmaṇi—The whole drama is woven round her. She is the main figure. The true description of her is given by her father Ramachandra Mukhopadhyaya :—

हृदयस्य पत्युः सविधे वसन्ती
हर्षं यमाप्नोति तृणस्य गेहे ।
हर्षं तथा भूतमुपैति साध्वी
नारी न सौधेऽपि विधाय वासम् ॥¹

“A devoted wife gets immense pleasure to live by her husband's side even in a hut. Without him she cannot get that pleasure even in a palace.”

“She thinks that a man and a woman do not become husband and wife by mere marriage rites. If both share each other's worries and pleasures only then are they fit to be called husband and wife.” She expresses this idea when she comes to live with her husband and is ready to share with him all his joys and sorrows :

पतिर्न पाणिग्रहमात्रतो भवेज्
जाया न जायेत च सप्तभिः पदैः ।
परस्परं यावन्कुलचारिणी
तौ दम्पती तौ च सुखाकरौ भुवि ॥²

When she comes to live with her husband, he has every doubt that she has come to drag him to worldly life but a single sentence from her sets all these doubts at rest:

सारदा—(त्वरितम्) देव ! कथमहं त्वां संसारपथं नेष्यामि । तव सहधर्मिण्यहं तव धर्मपथे साहायकमेव केवलं करिष्यामि ।³

“*Sāradā*—(quickly) My lord, How is it possible that I would drag you to worldly affairs ? I am your life partner. I have come only to assist in the performance of religious duties.”

To be treated as a Goddess is the highest honour a woman can aspire for. *Sāradāmaṇi* gets this honour on the *Phalahārīṇī pūjā* day when she is worshipped by her husband as a Goddess.

Hridaya, the sister's son of the Paramahansa, is a wicked man. He

1. First act, p. 5.
2. First act, p. 5.
3. First act, p. 9.

condemns Sārādāmaṇi without rhyme or reason. The Paramahansa cannot tolerate it and scolds him for this :

य इह वसति देवः शाश्वतो मे हृदन्तः
स यदि भवति रुष्टः स्यादपि प्राणरक्षा ।
अधिहृदयममुष्या राजमाने तु रुष्टे
न हरिहरविरिञ्चास्ते करिष्यन्ति रक्षाम् ॥¹

"If the God residing in my heart were ever to be angry with thee there may still be some chance of thy life being saved. But if the God living in her heart were to be cross with thee nobody, not even Viṣṇu, Brahmā or Śiva, will be able to save thee."

Sārādāmaṇi—has such a powerful personality that it transforms even a merciless dacoit into a good man.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa—is the husband of Sārādāmaṇi. He devotes all his life to the cause of bhakti. He does not want to lead a worldly life and he expects from his wife that she should help him in this mission rather than drag him to the world again. That is why he says :

आमन्त्रणं तव चिरस्य मदीयपाश्वे
द्वारं च साध्वि विवृतं सदनस्य नित्यम् ।
स्वाधीनता तव गतागतयोरिहास्ते
त्वं स्वेच्छया यदभिवाञ्छसि तत् कुरुष्व ॥²
कलौ नामैव जपनीयम् । यन्नाम तुभ्यं रोचते तदेव । अभेदो
ज्ञाननामिनोः मातृनामाहं जपामि । पितृनामापि केचनाद्रियन्ते ।
एतयोस्तु मातृनाम वरम् । मातुः सहजप्रसन्नत्वात् सुलभत्वाच्च ॥³

He is a great man of his time. His sister's son Hridaya describes him as Viśvānandapradātā (one who blesses the whole world).

लोके मान्यो महीयानतुल्यगुणयुतो मातुलो मे प्रसिद्धः
संसाराब्धेर्दुःरन्तात् कति कति न जनानुद्धार स्वशक्त्या ।
विश्वानन्दप्रदाता प्रणमति जनता यं समालोक्य दूरात् ॥⁴

"My maternal uncle, the great man, is well known in this world. He is respected by the world and is possessed of innumerable qualities. How many of the people did he not rescue from the ocean of the world with his

1. Fourth act, p. 28.
2. First act, p. 6.
3. First act, p. 10.
4. Fourth act, p. 25.

power ? He gives happiness to the world. The people even when they notice him from a distance bow to him."

The Paramahansa is ever in a devotional trance. Each particle of the world seems to him to be the personification of God. Everything is beautiful, everything enchanting :

आनन्दभङ्कारि पतत्रि-कूजितम् आनन्दसंचारि सुकोमलं तृणम् ।

आनन्दविस्तारि सुशोभनं वनं सत्यं जगत् सुन्दरसुन्दरं वरम् ॥¹

"The world really is nice, the most beautiful of the beautiful. It is resounded by the chirping birds exuding happiness. It is a soft grass giving pleasure. It is a beautiful forest spreading joy."

The Paramahansa believes in practical wisdom. He never indulges in high philosophy. When Sāradā says that she is an ordinary lady and so she is unable to follow philosophy of Bhakti the Paramahansa tells her that it is not at all necessary to know Philosophy or Metaphysics to obtain the supreme bliss. A man well-versed in all the *Śāstras* may be a fool. On the other hand an unsophisticated person may possess a very pure heart though he may know nothing :

कदाचन समविषयके समालोचने विद्यासागरो मयेत्यमुक्त आसीत्—किमाह भवान् पाण्डित्यं पाण्डित्यमिति ? केवलपाण्डित्येन किं भविष्यति ? गृध्रोऽपि ऊर्ध्वम् अत्यूर्ध्वं विचरति, किन्तु दृष्टिस्तस्य जङ्गलं प्रति, यत्रासते मृतदेहाः । पण्डिताः पुस्तकस्थां विद्यामात्रे डयन्ति सत्यं किन्तु मनांसि तेषां कुत्र ? हरिपादपद्मयोर्लीनं पण्डितं कामं स्वीकरोमि; किन्तु कामिनीकाञ्चनासक्तमहं तृणायैव मन्ये ।²

"Once while discussing something similar with Vidyāsāgara, I said : Why are you laying so much of stress on scholarship ? What will there be by scholarship alone ? Even a vulture flies up and up but its eyes are fixed on the jungle where the dead bodies lie. Granted, scholars repeat the bookish knowledge, but where are their minds ? I accept only that man a scholar who is deeply attached to the lotus feet of Hari but have no regard for him who is given to women or wealth." When he suffers from throat cancer, his wife Sāradā asks him to get rid of that disease but he tells her that if the Mother's desire is that he should have that disease then he would not try for its cure.

Many a time when wealthy people offered him big sums he politely refused them saying that he has nothing to do with money though he was financially very hard up all his life.

1. Fifth act, p. 41. 2. Fifth act, p. 47.

Bhāskarodayam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Bhāskarodayam* is written by J.B. Chaudhuri. It has fifteen acts and ninety nine pages. It is published from the Pracyavani, Calcutta, in the year 1961.

PLOT

The stage - manager announces that on the eve of the birthday of Ravindra Nath Tagore they are going to enact a play called *Bhāskarodayam*. The actress has her misgivings about a drama written in Sanskrit. She says that it may not be as good a success as the dramas written in other languages. But the stage-manager is confident about its success and popularity and says that Viśvakavi Ravindra Nath also had great love for this language.

First act—An English bailiff comes to Maharshi Devendranath, the father of Sri Ravindra Nath, to realize from him his debts. His treasurer requests him to go into hiding as they have no money at present. He would tell the bailiff, he says, that he (Devendra Nath) is not at home and has gone somewhere. But Devendra Nath firmly refuses to do so and himself comes out to talk to the bailiff. The Bailiff tells Devendra Nath that if he has no money to repay his debts, he should accompany him to the court. Devendra Nath readily does so. He even does not inform the ladies of the house. This incident is put out just to impress upon the minds of the readers that Ravindra Nath inherited the quality of truthfulness from his father.

Second Act—Devendra Nath goes to meet his uncle Prasanna Kumar who loves him very much and wants that he should proceed wisely in this world. He tells him that the worldly activities cannot depend on truth alone. Truth has on occasions to be diluted with falsehood. This is the practical side of life. Devendra Nath humbly says that he would not like to enter into discussion with him on this subject but his firm belief is that he should not do anything wrong and should not budge an inch from the path of truth. This act also shows the saintly disposition of the poet's father.

Third Act—Boy Ravindranath grows up under the care of servants. One of them, Shyam by name, loves him very much but does not let him go out. The poet in Ravindranath then makes friends with nature even though confined into the four walls of the house. The little boy spends his childhood lonely. Still he is happy because he can enjoy the captivating beauty of nature through the window of his room.

Fourth Act—Four imaginary characters are discussing about the modern trends of the Tagore family. They are the Santal tenants Jhamru, Dagru, Chamri (Jhamru's wife) and Bhamri (Dagru's wife). Both Jhamru and Dagru are astonished to know that the ladies of the Tagore family learn English ball room dance and horse riding.

Fifth Act—Shāradā Devi, the poet's mother, is not keeping good health. She is happy however that all her children are well-versed in Sanskrit and love each other. Saudāminī, her eldest daughter, informs her that Ravindra Nath is interested in Sanskrit and he can recite the Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa for her. Ravindra Nath when asked agrees to do so. Shāradā Devī is very happy at this.

Sixth Act—Ravindra Nath reads his poem 'Delhi Durbar' on the occasion of the eleventh conference of the celebrated 'Hindu Mela'. His poetic talent is praised by everybody present there. This act shows that the Tagores not only cultivated the arts and culture of India in their own family but propagated it in society also. The 'Chaitra Mela' Institution was also started by Ravindra family. The aim of the institution was mental and physical development.

Seventh Act—Ravindra Nath does not like the confinement of the School. He wants to learn much higher things in the school of nature. The family members and friends decide to start a new literary magazine "Bhāratī" for the improvement and propagation of Bengali language and literature.

Eighth Act—Bengali poet Beharilal has great poetical influence on the young poet Ravindranath. Once Beharilal is invited to lunch at the house of Kādambarī (Ravindra nath's sister-in-law) who herself is a woman of literary taste and culture. She is a great admirer of poet Beharilal, Ravindra Nath is also very much impressed by him. Both show their respect to the elderly poet.

Ninth Act—Ravindra Nath is in London and stays in the house of one Dr. Scott. He has very good relations with his family and is almost looked upon as one of its members. He always spends his evenings with the Scot

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Ravindra obeys him and sings the song. His father is so much pleased with him that he offers him Rs. 500 as reward then and there.

CHARACTERIZATION

Ravindranath—Ravindranath is a worthy son of a worthy father. In his early life, Maharshi Devendrānath, the father of Ravindranath, suffers many humiliations and troubles due to his truthfulness. Ravindranath also inherits this quality. Due to the continuous illness of his mother Ravindra spends his early childhood under the care of servants. They do not treat him very kindly. Due to this, child Ravindra develops the habit of thinking and brooding over Nature as he sees it through his window. Later this very habit makes him a great poet of Nature. Even at the age of eight he develops intimacy with Nature. He is very much inspired to see the 'Vāṭavṛkṣa' just opposite to his window. He sees in it the image of the Almighty :

वटद्रुम ! जटालस्त्वं छायामायावपुर्धरः ।

अन्तस्ते राजते कोऽसौ विभुर्विश्वविमोहनः ॥¹

Ravindra belongs to a large family. Though all the men and the women are brought up in an ultra modern way they all have intense love for Sanskrit. Shārādā Devi enjoys listening to the Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa from the lips of Ravindranath. Ravindranath is not only a poet of nature but a great patriot too. He reads his poem 'Delhi Durbar' as also Satyendranath's national song 'gao bharater jai' on the occasion of the 17th Hindu Mela.

In Kādambarī Ravindranath has an affectionate sister-in-law. Both of them love each other but go on quarrelling too. When Kādambarī invites Beharilal, a great Bengali poet, they both have wordy duel. Beharilal has to intervene and pacify them. :

बिहारिलालः—प्रियौ मम, मा पुनः कलहे प्रवर्तिष्याथाम् । रवीन्द्र ! मस्तिष्केण हीनस्त्वं स्या यदि ईदृश्याः प्रजावतीदेव्याः स्नेहस्याभिनन्दनोच्छलच्चित्तवृत्तौः पारमार्थिकं स्वरूपं न जानीषे ॥²

"Biharilal : My darlings, don't you engage yourselves again in quarrel. Ravindra, you would lose your brain if you cannot know the reality of the working of the mind of such brother's wife of yours as is brimming out with the appreciation of affection."

While in London Ravindranath has to stay with an English family. He is treated there as a family member, still he never forgets that he is an

1. Third act, p. 15.

2. Eighth act, p. 51.

Indian. He teaches Sanskrit and Indian music to the young girl of that family. He also knows that Indians have yet to learn many things from the Britishers. He expresses this opinion of his to the young girl of the Scott family with which he is putting up in the following words :

रवीन्द्रनाथः - इजरोपीयेभ्यो यच्चच्छिक्षणीयं तत् सर्वमधिकतुम्हं यते । एतेभ्यो बाहुल्येन विद्यतेऽस्माकं शिक्षणीयं ।¹

"Ravindranath : I try to learn all that is worth learning from the Europeans. For us there are many more things which are worth learning."

At the age of twenty Ravindranath completely establishes himself as a poet :

ज्योतिरिन्द्रनाथः—श्रीमन् रवे ! तव प्रथमं गीतिनाट्यं वाल्मीकिप्रतिभा सत्यमेव सङ्गीते नवसाहस्रवतार इति ।²

"Joytirindranath : Mr. Ravindra, your first musical play Vālmiki Pratibhā, (the genius of Vālmiki) is really, a new and bold attempt in music."

Even Bankimchandra, the great literary figure of his times, is full of praise for Ravindranath :

बङ्किमचन्द्रः—सुदूरदेशे तिष्ठसि । नैनं जानासि ? एष ह्युदीयमानवङ्गसाहित्य-भास्करो महर्षेर्देवेन्द्रनाथस्य कुलपावनो रवीन्द्रनाथस्तरुणो वयस्यपि "सन्ध्यासङ्गीत" कारः ।

"Bankimchandra : You live at a far-off place. Don't you know this Ravindranath, the scion of the family of Maharsi Devendra Nath, the Sun of the rising Bengali literature. Even in the young age he has composed the 'Sandhyāsāṅgīta'."

Ravindranath is in deep communion with nature. His songs convey his innermost feelings as can be seen from the following poem :

प्रभातेऽद्यतने दिनमणिकरः

कथं प्रविष्टो मयि प्राणपुष्पशरः

कथं प्रविशति गुहान्धकारे प्रभातविहगगानम् ।

न जाने कथं दीर्घकालान्तरे प्राणानां नु जागरणम् ।

जागरितः प्राणप्राणः

1. Ninth act, p. 61.

2. Tenth act, p. 65.

3. Eleventh act, p. 73.

अयि रे उद्वेलितं प्राणवारि
 अयि भोः प्राणसंवेदना प्राणानामावेगः सर्वरोधनहाही ।
 थर थर थर—कम्पितभूधरः
 स्खलनं प्रभूतं शिलाराशिराशेः
 रोधनदोलित-फेनिल-सलिल-
 भीमगर्जनं दारुणाक्रोशे ।¹

Thus we see that the writer has depicted the character of Ravindranath in all its varied aspects. Right from his childhood to his youth, from his early upbringing to his hectic literary activities his whole life history has been presented here in a very interesting form, how he behaved with his relatives, how he spent his life in foreign countries, all these and many other incidents of his life are dealt with here in as full and as faithful a manner as possible.

1. Twelfth act, p. 75.

Ānandarādhām

INTRODUCTORY

The *Ānandarādhām* is a play in ten acts and 112 pages. It is written by J. B. Chaudhuri and is published from Calcutta in the year 1962.

For collection of materials the author depended upon authentic sources, ancient ones such as the Purāṇas and the Saṁhitās like the Garga Saṁhitā, as well as the later ones, particularly the Padāvalīs on Rādhākṛṣṇa that are so very popular in Eastern India, viz. those of Chandidas, Vidyapati, Jnanadas, Govinddas and others.

PLOT

First act—Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in order to test the intensity of love of Rādhā for himself, comes to her disguised as a neighbour woman and condemns Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā cannot hear harsh words about Kṛṣṇa and rebukes the neighbour woman. Kṛṣṇa pleased with Rādhā discloses his true self and praises her.

Second act—Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are shown talking to each other. Rādhā wants to know from Kṛṣṇa as to why he has taken so long to come to the appointed place. Kṛṣṇa tells her that he was held up because he had to kill the demons and the delay on his part is therefore, not intentional.

In the third scene of this act Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa stage a mock quarrel. Kṛṣṇa demands the ferry charges from Rādhā and her friends for taking them from the one bank of the Gaṅgā to the other. At this Rādhā and her friends object to the grazing of the cows of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the fields of Vṛndāvana over which Rādhā has the proprietary rights. Both the parties enjoy this quarrel very much which in the end gives way to pleasant conversation.

Third act—In this act, the three stages of love between Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are discussed i. e. waiting, meeting and enjoying. After a long wait both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet, they enjoy the game of swinging and then have a group dance.

Fourth act—Nanda and Yaśodā fear that their son Kṛṣṇa would never return if he goes out of Vṛndāvana. On the other hand Kāṁsa is informed by

Nārada that the person who is destined to kill him has come into being. Kāṁsa sends Akrūra to bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā.

Fifth act—Even the protest of Nanda has no effect on Kṛṣṇa and he leaves Vṛndāvana to participate in Dhanuryajña with Akrūra.

Sixth act—Kṛṣṇa takes leave of Rādhā before going out of Vṛndāvana. He assures her that he would definitely return to Vṛndāvana.

Seventh act—The pathetic scene of Kṛṣṇa's departure for Mathurā. Rādhā faints at the feet of Mother Yaśodā and her grief knows no bound.

Eighth act—Kṛṣṇa kills Kāṁsa in a duel and Balarāma kills his rival Muṣṭika.

Ninth act—Kṛṣṇa sends Uddhava with a message to Nanda and the Gopikās. The Gopikās tell him the pathetic condition of Vṛndāvana in the absence of Kṛṣṇa.

Tenth act—Rādhā, with all her friends bewails her lot. Vṛndā, a gopikā, leaves for Mathurā to bring Kṛṣṇa back to save Rādhā's life.

Eleventh act—Vṛndā returns with Balarāma who consoles Nanda, Yaśodā and Rādhā. Nanda blesses Śrī Rādhā for making the world blissful and Rādhā in her turn prays for the extinction of all hatred throughout the world between individuals, races and countries as well as for permanent peace and deep-rooted friendship amongst all. With this the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Rādhā—Rādhā is the main character of the play. She is the 'Ādyā Śakti' who governs the whole world, on whose order the whole world is created. The Nāndī verse says—

वन्दे श्रीवृन्दावनविलासिनीं

विश्वस्य शाश्वतानन्दरूपिणीम् ।

मधुमयीं नन्दसुतमनोमोहिनीं

महाभावाम्बां मङ्गलवर्षिणीम् ॥

"I bow to the lady of Vṛndāvana who is of the form of eternal happiness for the world, sweet, captivating the mind of Nanda's son; the mother with great magnanimity, showering bliss."

When the Naṭī expresses the view that the whole life of Rādhā is a long tale of woe and that she has been crying all her life and so in what way the depiction of her character can delight the audience the stage-manager

says that her (Rādhā's) crying is not that of an ordinary woman ; it is extraordinary in that :

जगज्जननी श्रीराधिका रोदिति अस्माकं कृते एव । स्वसन्तानकृतदुष्कृतिपुञ्जस्य अश्रुधारया-
पसारणार्थमेव महाजनन्या निरन्तररोदनम् । जनन्या एतादृशदुःखविषये वयं न चिन्तनपरा इत्येव
प्राच्यवाणीमन्दिरस्य चिन्ताकारणम् । तेन श्रीराधिकाया महाचरितमवश्यमेव प्रयोगमुखेनावता-
रणीयमिति ।¹

"Śrī Rādhikā, the mother of the universe, is weeping for our sake only. The purpose of the weeping of the great mother is to ward off by means of the streaming tears the mass of evil deeds of her offsprings. The only worry of the Prācyavāṇīmandira is our carelessness about this anxiety of the mother. So the great story of Śrī Rādhikā should surely be put on the stage."

Rādhā is a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Nothing on earth can stop her when she hears the melodious tunes of his flute. Subala, the friend of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, describes her miserable condition in the following words :

सुबलः—अहो कष्टं वृकभानुसुतायाः श्रीराधायाः । वृन्दावनेश्वर्ये तस्यै नान्यत् किमपि रोचते ।
मुखर-जटिलादिभिर्भृशं प्रपीडिताऽपि सा श्रीकृष्णनामजपात् श्रीकृष्णध्यानात् कथंचन न
विरमति । गोपीकुलललामभूता सैव सत्यं श्रीकृष्णकलंकिनी जाता । श्रीकृष्णस्य वंशीध्वनिः सर्वान्
नन्दयति; तच्छ्रवणमात्रमेषा भवति बाह्यज्ञानविवर्जिता । श्रीकृष्णदर्शनेन विना नास्या हृदये
कथमपि सुखं भवति ।²

"Subala—Oh, how painful it is for Śrī Rādhā, the daughter of Br̥kabhānu. She, the mistress of Vṛndāvana, has no liking for any other thing. She does not give up the meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa or muttering of his name. It is she, the crest jewel of the race of the cow-herds, who alone carries really the imprint of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The notes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute please everybody ; the very moment she (Rādhā) listens to them she loses all consciousness of the outside world. Nothing gives happiness to her heart except the sight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

Sometimes Rādhā behaves like a desperate girl who does not know what to do when her lover does not come to her. She feels helpless and tells her friends :

श्रीराधा—विशाखे ! ललिते ! युवां गच्छताम् ! ध्रुवमायातो मे प्रियः सखा, अन्यथा किं मे

1. P. 19.

2. Third act, p. 38.

भविष्यति ? जातस्य ध्रुवं मृत्युः, सर्वस्वोत्सर्ग-कारिण्या मे ईदृशी भवति चेत् परिणतिः, किं तज् जगतो हिताय भविष्यति ? स्वर्गोन्नतप्रेम्णः पातालपातिनी परिणतिर्जगति प्रेमविभीषिकायाः कारणं भविष्यति ।¹

“Śrī Rādhā—dear Viśākhā and Lalitā, let both of you go. Surely my friend has come, otherwise what will become of me. Death is sure to come to one who is born. If that is going to be my fate who has given all that she has, will that lead to the well-being of the world ? The effect of the fall in the nether world of the love as lofty as the heaven will result in scaring away (the people) from love ?”

Kṛṣṇa is crooked only at three points but Rādhā excels him in this : she is crooked at eight points. That is what Viśākhā says to Kṛṣṇa :

विशाखा—अयि लीलामहानिकुञ्जकुञ्जरेन्द्र ! रमणीयं भणसि अयि त्रिभङ्गभङ्गिम श्यामसुन्दर ! त्वं त्रिवक्त्रश्चेद् अष्टवक्त्राऽस्माकं श्रीराधा । तव वक्त्रत्वमादौ अन्ते मध्ये च । राधाया वक्त्रत्वं पुनर्वान्ये, केशे, भ्रुवि दृष्टौ, हास्ये, गमने अवगुण्ठने च । वक्त्रेश्वर ! वक्त्रेश्वरत्वप्रकटनेन न त्वं कदापि जयी स्याः ।²

“Viśākhā—O you, the lord of elephants for the big lovers with playful activities, you speak nicely. O you the dear and the handsome one with three kinds of crookedness (*vakratva*), our Śrī Rādhā has eight kinds of crookedness (*vakratva*), Your *vakratva* is found in the beginning, middle and end. But Rādhā's *vakrtva* is found in speech, hair, eyebrows, laughter, gait, veil and heart. O, the lord of *vakratva*, in your manifestation of the excellence of *vakratva* you will never be able to score a victory.”

Though Rādhā loves Kṛṣṇa immensely yet when he asks her permission to go to Mathurā to kill Kāṁsa she does not stand in his way. She is not the type of girl who may prove an obstacle in the way of her lover and the well-being of the world to which end as she knows, all his actions are directed :

श्रीराधा (विचिन्तयन्ती) — अहो ! घराया दुःखमारोऽवश्यमेव मोचनीयः ! प्रियो मे न गच्छति चेन्महत् कष्टमापतितं स्यात् । (श्रीकृष्ण प्रति) नाथ ! यदि तदेव सत्यं नाहं तव गमने बाधा भवेयम्, किन्तु कंसनिघनादनन्तरं त्वया प्रत्यागन्तव्यम् । अहं कथञ्चन कालं नेष्यामि ।³

Śhrī Rādhā (*meditating*) : “Oh, the weight of sorrows must be lifted off the earth. If my loved one does not go a great calamity may befall.

1. Third act, p. 39.

2. Second act, p. 35.

3. Sixth act, p. 80.

(To Śrī Kṛṣṇa) My lord, if that were true, I would not come in the way of your leaving (this place) but you would please come back after the death of Kāṁsa. I will somehow while away my time.

Her devotion to Kṛṣṇa becomes still more manifest when (Kṛṣṇa disguised as) a woman Gopadevatā comes to her and begins condemning Kṛṣṇa before her, Rādhā is courteous to the lady who is her guest but is furious when she condemns and abuses Kṛṣṇa. She is firmly of the opinion that all the misery through which she is passing is all her doing and her lover Kṛṣṇa has nothing to do with it :

राधा—(सरोषम्) सखि ! आश्चर्यम् ! अद्भुतस्ते वचनविन्यासः । अपि सत्यं त्वं कस्यापि प्रेमास्पदं या भाषसे प्राणप्रियो दुःखोपजननहेतोस्त्यक्तव्य इति ? गोपदेवते ! अग्नि-नैर्गरी दहति सत्यं, किन्तु का नाम नगरी तं त्यजति ? निदाघमार्तण्डः शुष्ककर्दमावसन्नजीवितां कमलिनीं विधत्ते तस्मात् किं सा तं त्यजति ? सर्वं दुःखं प्रियायाः सर्वं सुखं नाथस्येति मे मतिः । नार्या जीवनं प्रियस्य हितायैव । क्व तस्याः स्वतन्त्रतावस्थितिः क्व वा स्वतन्त्रानुभूतिः ?¹

"Rādhā—(Angrily) What a surprise, O friend, thy speech is exquisite. Are you in love with someone that you say 'one should give up the thought of the lover who is nothing but a cause of distress'. O Gopadevatā ! true, the fire burns a town but what town is there which discards the fire ? The summer sun blights the lotus plant by drying up the (life-giving) mud but does the lotus plant repel it for that reason ? In my opinion love is all torture for the beloved. The life of a woman is meant only for the well being of her lover. Has she any independent individuality or an independent way of thinking ?"

Kṛṣṇa—He is the Lord of the whole universe but he does not manifest his 'Virāṭsvarūpa' every now and then. The Gopikās have no illusion about his greatness

Both Kṛṣṇa and the Gopikās pick up an argument and exchange hot words because Kṛṣṇa wants that they should give some money by way of tax for selling ghee (ghṛta) which Gopikās refuse because they are taking it for sacrificial purpose. After this goes on for quite sometime the war of words which ultimately ends on a very pleasant note. The Gopikās then praise Kṛṣṇa in the following words :

जयति जयति—यदुकुलपतिरपहृत-दुष्कृतिदर्पः ।

शल-तोषल-दर्शित-बल-मर्दित-कालियसर्पः ॥

1. First act, p. 27.

जयति जयति सुरजनगतिरङ्कितगलवनमालः ।
 पापनिधन-रसित-सुजन-नन्दित गोकुलवनमालः ॥
 जयति जयति मुनिगणगतिवृकसुता चिरधृतिः ।
 वृन्दावन-मननशरण-नवनीतहरण-कृतिः ॥
 जयति जयति धरणी-रति-मणिमञ्जीरधारी ।
 गोकुलजनवरणमरण-मधु-मञ्जरीहारी ॥¹

As Rādhā is highly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa also considers her (Rādhā) as her ever-accompanying consort. When Rādhā becomes angry with Kṛṣṇa for not keeping his word Kṛṣṇa tenders profuse apologies :

श्रीकृष्णः—(राधिकामुद्दिश्य) देवि ! क्षमाहोष्यमिदानीं जनः । न त्वं मम केवल-
 मेतज्जन्मलीलासहचरी, सर्वलीलावतारसहचर्यसि । राघे ! तव देहस्य दशस्ववयवेषु राजन्ते
 दशावताररूपरेखाः । तथाहि—

नेत्रे मीनरुचिः स कूर्म उरसि ऋडे स्फुरद्भूतला
 मध्यं ते नरकेसरिप्रतिभटं गुल्फस्तु ते वामनः ।
 रामाणां शिरसि स्थिताऽसि सततं कायस्तव श्रीघनः
 शुद्धायास्तव सर्वतो विजयते माने परं कल्पिता ॥²

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa (To Rādhikā) respectable lady, I deserve your forgiveness. You are not only my companion for the playful activity of this life; you are my partner for all my playful incarnations. O Rādhā, the ten limbs of your body are decorated with lines of the ten incarnations, viz. ‘In your eyes the appearance of fish is found (indicating the Matsyāvatāra), in the breast is found the tortoise (indicating the Kūrmāvatāra). Your waist is the rival of Nṛsiṃha; your ankle is Vāmana; you are the foremost of the beautiful ladies; your body is Śrīghana all the time everywhere; it is only in anger that you give the impression of (the incarnation of) Kalki’.

Attracted by the melodious notes of the flute of Kṛṣṇa Gopikās forget everything and come running to him. But Kṛṣṇa tells them that they are on the wrong side. He explains to them the course an ideal lady should follow :

क्षणमपि न विलम्बः कार्यं आर्याभिरस्मिन्
 गहन-विपिनमध्ये, गम्यतां स्व-स्वगेहम् ।

1. Second act, p. 36.

2. Third act, p. 47.

परिचरत परीता भक्तिभावेन सर्वान्

पति-सुत-जनकादीन् एष वो धर्ममार्गः ॥¹

"You good ladies should go to your respective homes and not tarry even for a moment. You should devote yourself diligently to the service of your husbands, children and parents. This indeed is the path of your duty".

But these instructions are meant only to test their true love for him. When Kṛṣṇa thinks that Gopikās have full faith in him he reveals his true feelings to them :

युष्मन्मनो मयि समर्पितमित्यवेत्य

प्रीयेऽहमद्य भवतीषु दृढं रमण्यः ।

एकात्मबुद्धिरुदिता मयि वो यदेषा

तेनाशु मोक्षपदवी च करस्थितैव ॥²

"Knowing that your heart is completely set on me I am immensely pleased with you, O fair ones ! This notion of your oneness with me that has risen in your mind is a sure guarantee for your speedy salvation."

As a son, Kṛṣṇa is very obedient to his parents. He cannot tolerate tears in his mother's eyes :

श्रीकृष्णः (आदौ भूयो भूयो मातरं ततश्च सङ्कृत् पितरं प्रणमति) जननि ! कथं जलपूरार्द्रनयना तिष्ठसि ? परमसुखस्थाने गोकुले अपि अत्याहितं किमपि संघटितम् ?

आस्यं किं ते मलिन-मलिनं किन्तु नेत्रे च सिक्तं

का ते बाधा हृदि समुदिता ब्रूहि मामाशु मातः ।

दोर्जन्यं मे किमु कपटिना बोधिताऽस्यग्रजेन ?

पित्रा सार्धं कृतकलहया किं त्वया रुद्यते वा ?³

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa—(First paying repeated obeisance to his mother and then saluting his father once) Mother, why doest thou sit with running eyes ? Has any calamity befallen even the supremely delightful place like Gokula ? Why is thy face so wan and eyes so welling ? What is it that troubles thy heart, tell me quickly, O mother ? Has that rogue of my elder brother told thee of some mischief of mine ? Or are thou shedding tears because you had a quarrel with my father ?"

When leaving for Mathurā Kṛṣṇa praises his father and mother, who

1. Third act, p. 57.

2. Third act, p. 58.

3. Fourth act, p. 63.

looked after him with so much love and affection and who sacrificed everything for his sake :

नवनीतादपि मृदुलं स्नेहनवनीतमहो हृदये
यत्त्वं धारयसि जननि ! ततस्त्वमसि भुवने गरिष्ठा ।
गोकुलनरपते तात ! सौभाग्यं मत्ताः समधिकं कस्य
यस्य स्नेहमयस्त्वं जनकोऽसि योगमायाया जनकः ॥

"O mother, the unction of affection which is softer even than butter that thou fosterest in thy heart, makes thee the sublimest creature in the world. O lord of Gokula, my dad, who could be more fortunate than myself whose affectionate father thou art, the progenitor of Yogamāyā ?"

Kṛṣṇa reveals his true nature when he reaches Mathurā and faces Kāṁsa. The charming young man who is favourite of all the young and old in Gokula is now a fierce warrior challenging Kāṁsa in the following words :

कृष्णः—रे अत्याचारमूर्ते धराभार ! तवापसारणादद्य धरित्री वीतभारा वीतकलङ्का च भविष्यति, ध्रुवमहं त्वामद्य शमनधाम प्रेषये । आत्मकर्मफलं भुङ्क्ष्व ।^१

"Kṛṣṇa—O thou tyranny incarnate, thou burden on this earth ! By thy elimination the earth will be light of its burden and free from stigma. I shall decidedly despatch you to the abode of Yama today. Reap the reward of thy action."

Thus we see that sometimes Kṛṣṇa is the Lord who governs the whole world and at other times he is a loving and obedient son and at still other times he is a youthful lover making love to the gopikās.

1. Seventh act, p. 82.

2. Eighth act, p. 93.

Vimalayatīndram

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Vimalayatīndram* written by J. B. Chaudhuri deals with the life of Shri Ramanuja. It has seventeen acts and 80 pages and is published from the Pracyavani, Calcutta, in the year 1962.

PLOT

First act—After Prastāvanā, Yadava prakash, Lakshman's Guru and Lakshman (Ramanuja's name in his earlier years) are shown discussing some philosophical problems of the Upaniṣads. Lakshman does not agree with his guru (Yadava Prakash) about his interpretation of some of the *mantras*. He humbly tells him that he has not fully grasped the meanings of some of them and if he would allow him he may put forward his own explanation. This arouses Yadava Prakash's jealousy of his pupil which he keeps in check, making no outward show of it, and permits him to explain the *mantras*. After he has explained them he loses all self-control and tells him to leave his place and go somewhere else. He calls one of his old pupils who is also jealous of the extraordinary intelligence of Lakshman. The old pupil suggests to Yadava Prakash in confidence to end Lakshman's life by throwing him into the river. Yadava Prakash readily approves of it and asks his pupil to push Lakshman into the water when they all go to take bath in the Ganges.

Second act—Govinda, the son of Ramanuja's maternal aunt, comes to know of the vicious plan of Yadava Prakash and his pupils. He forewarns Lakshman to leave the place at once and go somewhere else. Lakshman reluctantly leaves the place and goes deep into the forest.

Third act—A hunter with his wife meets Ramanuja there and showers love and affection on him. After some time the hunter's wife asks for water which is not to be seen for miles together. Lakshman makes a frantic search for it. Fortunately after a while he comes upon a pond which is full of water. He helps quench the thirst of the wife of the hunter. Both the hunter and his wife are very much pleased with his devotion and bless him to shine in the world like Lakshman, the younger brother of Rāma. Lakshman

again goes to bring water for the wife of the hunter but when he returns neither the hunter nor his wife are to be seen there. It is only then that he realizes that he had met no other than Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa in the guise of the hunter and his wife,

Fourth act—Kantimati, the mother of Lakshman, and his aunt Dyutimati are worried because both Lakshman and Govind are away from their home to take bath in the Gaṅgā. Dyutimati fears that some calamity has befallen them. But Kantimati tells her that whatever calamity might have befallen them, they are out of danger now due to the blessings of the Almighty. Meanwhile Lakshman returns and tells them the whole story. They are both happy and they thank God for saving the life of their dear sons.

Fifth act—Alvandar Yamunacharya, a teacher who is very much impressed by the extraordinary intelligence of Lakshman, tells him that he has been looking for a person like him. He also tells him that the daughter of the king of Kanchipur is ill and though Yadavaprakash has taken the treatment in his hands she is showing no signs of improvement. A Brahmarākṣasa under whose influence she has fallen has told Yadavaprakash that he would not leave her as long as she is under his (Yadava's) treatment. She can be cured only if Lakshman comes over there. Ramanuja (Lakshman) is ready to go at once. He cannot see anybody in distress.

Sixth act—Ramanuja reaches the place where the princess is suffering from the effect of the Brahmarākṣasa. Yadavaprakash with his pupils is already present there. When Ramanuja arrives and requests Brahmarākṣasa to leave the princess, he (the Brahmarākṣasa) immediately obeys him and leaves her (the princess). Yadavaprakash says that it goes to his credit that Ramanuja is able to cure the princess, for he is his pupil. But after sometime when Yadavaprakash again misinterprets the *mantras* Ramanuja interrupts him and points out that the *mantras* have an altogether different meaning. Yadavaprakash becomes furious at this and swears that he would never see his face again.

Seventh act—Yamunacharya loves Lakshman and adores him in his heart since he saw him first. He thinks that he is the only man who can show to the people the right path. Though on death bed, he sends Mahapurna, his pupil, to bring Lakshman. He breathes his last even before Lakshman arrives. Vararanga, another disciple of Yamunacharya, is by his side. Yamunacharya is dead but three fingers of his hand are bent down. On an enquiry the disciple tells him that while dying the Acharya had three desires

in his mind. If somebody fulfils them his soul would rest in peace. When Lakshman pledges to fulfil them the fingers of the dead body become automatically straight. All are very happy to see this.

Eighth act—One Kanchipurna is a great devotee of the Lord. When he returns from Tirupati he meets Ramanuja and clears his doubts about many religious and philosophical problems. When Ramanuja tells him that he wants to become his pupil, Kanchipurna declines to initiate him because he himself belongs to lower caste. He tells Ramanuja that he should go to Mahapurna, who, he thinks, will be able to initiate him. As suggested by Kanchipurna, Ramanuja goes to Mahapurna who initiates him (Ramanuja) and makes him his disciple.

Ninth act—Jamamba, the wife of Ramanuja, is an uneducated lady. She is proud of her high caste and looks down upon and actually insults the wife of Mahapurna, the teacher of Ramanuja, who was staying with him at his express request. Mahapurna's wife pours some water into her pitcher from that of Jamamba's. At this Jamamba abuses and insults her. Mahapurna and his wife leave the house of Ramanuja. When Ramanuja comes to know of the whole incident he makes up his mind to take to Sannyāsa.

Tenth act—Varadaraja, instructs Yadavaprakash through Kanchipurna to become Ramanuja's disciple. Yadavaprakash's mother also tells him that his only refuge lies in Ramanuja. Yadavaprakash himself feels inclined towards Ramanuja. Ramanuja satisfies him and Kuresh (a disciple of Yadavaprakash) when they ask him certain questions. Ramanuja initiates him and gives him the new name of Govindadas. He also requests him to compose a new book *Yatidharmasamuccaya*.

Eleventh act—Goshthipurna, a Sadhu, refuses eighteen times to give Ramanuja a sacred *mantra*. Ramanuja is very sad at this. After much persuasion Ramanuja succeeds in getting the *mantra* from Goshthipurna on the condition that he would not disclose it to anybody else. But on acquiring it Ramanuja gives it (*mantra*) to his pupils and thousands of other people. At first Goshthipurna is very angry with him (Ramanuja) but finally makes up with him.

Twelfth act—Ramanuja goes with Kuresh to Kashmir and brings from there the only copy of the Baudhāyanavṛtti preserved in the Śāradāpīṭha there. The Pandits of Kashmir are jealous of Ramanuja and Kuresh; they waylay them after a month and snatch the copy from them. Ramanuja is very sad at this but Kuresh promises to present him with an exact copy of the Vṛtti

within only a few days because he has already got the whole work by heart sitting late at night when Ramanuja would be sleeping. Ramanuja begins to dictate the *Srībhāṣya*, asking Kuresh to stop only when he comes to notice some discrepancy or defect in his dictation.

Thirteenth act—The king of Kashmir comes and apologizes before Ramanuja. He is ashamed to hear about the misbehaviour of the Kashmiri Pandits. Ramanuja is happy that the king of Kashmir is a sensible man. Meanwhile a voice from above announces that the Goddess of *Śāradāpīṭha*, *Śrī Sarasvatī*, is pleased with Ramanuja and utters the blessing that the commentary of the *Baudhāyanavṛtti* will be known from that time onwards as the *Srī Bhāṣya*.

Fourteenth act—Kuranath, the pupil of Ramanuja, is blessed with two sons. Ramanuja comes and blesses them. He also tells Kuranath that his sons would shine in the whole world.

Fifteenth act—Dhanurdas is deeply attached to Hemamba, a beautiful woman, whom he considers the best beauty on the earth. Ramanuja arranges to show him the highest beauty, the image of *Laksmīpati*, at *Srirangam*. Dhanurdas is very much impressed by the beautiful image of the Lord and becomes the disciple of Ramanuja. On the other hand to show his pupil the difference between detachment and attachment to worldly affairs he arranges Dhanurdas and Hemamba's stay near his *Āśrama* where other *Brāhmaṇa* boys are living. Once when the *Brāhmaṇa* boys under the guise of thieves enter into the house of Hemamba she allows them to take her ornaments feigning deep slumber. Ramanuja makes his disciples understand the difference between them and Dhanurdas.

Sixteenth act—*Krimikantha*, the king of the *Chola* country, is the follower of *Shaivism*. He is jealous of Ramanuja because he being a subject of the *Chola* country spreads *Vaishnavism*. *Krimikantha* cannot tolerate this and sends for Ramanuja to come to his assembly. Kuresh, the beloved and the most obedient disciple of Ramanuja, senses some foul play in this. He sends Ramanuja to a far off place and himself goes to the place of *Krimikantha* in the guise of Ramanuja. There in the assembly he vanquishes his opponents in *Sāstrārtha*. *Krimikantha* is furious at this and orders the pulling out of both of his eyes. When this is done there is commotion in the world. At the calamity of this magnitude Nature too shows its destructive phase.

Seventeenth act—Ramanuja is busy in *Harināmasaṅkīrtanam*. There is no

low or high caste in his eyes. He invites a Cāṇḍāla couple to join him when it expresses its desire to come to him, Even a Mohammedan woman Lachimar joins the Bhāgavata religion and stays with Ramanuja. He has among his disciples converts from all the faiths—Buddhism, Islam and so on. Ramanuja blesses them all.

CHARACTERIZATION

Ramanuja—His life has been a continuous struggle against corruption in society as well as individuals. In the student age when he is very young he has to deal with his teacher Yadavaprakash who would not take kindly to the freedom of thought and expression among his pupils. Ramanuja's habit of free expression of his thoughts brings him face to face with a calamity which could well have ended his life.

His mental as well as spiritual powers become manifest even when he is very young. He succeeds where even his teacher Yadavaprakash fails. The Brahmarākṣasa who does not leave the daughter of the king of Kanchipur when treated by Yadavaprakash, leaves when Ramanuja arrives :

(नेपथ्ये ब्रह्मराक्षसः) पुनरेषोपि ममानन्दः । राजकुमारीयं श्रीलरामानुजकृपया समुद्धृता ।
यादवप्रकाशस्य नासीच्छक्तिः । श्रीरामानुजसाधना विद्योततां, श्रीरामानुजस्य जगच्छुभकामना
प्रस्फुरतु, भगवान् भवतु सर्वेषां सहायः ।¹

“(From behind the curtain—Brahmarākṣasa)”

“This again gives me delight. This princess has recovered due to the favour of Shri Ramanuja. It was not within Yadavaprakash's power to do so. May the *Sādhanā* of Ramanuja shine, may Ramanuja's good wishes for the world spread. May God help all.”

From his early childhood Ramanuja shows an unusual promise. Yamunacharya, a great saint of his time, is very much impressed by his extraordinary spiritual power. He nominates him to his *gaddi*. Vararanga, another disciple, tells him :

भगवता यामुनाचार्येण भवानेवास्माकं नेतृरूपेण स्वीकृतः ।²

“Venerable Yamunacharya has accepted yourself alone as our leader.”

Ramanuja is liberal enough to spread the name of God to as many people as he can. He gets a sacred *mantra* from Gosthipurna on the condition that he would not disclose it to anybody else. But when he acquires

1. Sixth act, p. 25.

2. Seventh act, p. 30.

it he throws the condition to winds and discloses it to everybody. When Gosthipurna comes to know of it he is furious. He chides Ramanuja in the strongest possible language for having broken his word. But Ramanuja is remorseless. He does not show even a trace of penitence; in spite of his characteristic humility he is free and frank. The greatest good of the greatest number is his motto. And no words and no promises can stand in the way of this. How can a great reformer like Ramanuja keep to himself that which would lead to the upliftment of his fellow beings ?

रामानुजः (भयलेशहीनः सविनयम्) महात्मन् ! नरकवासाय दृढसंकल्पोऽहं भवदादेश-
मुलङ्घितवान् । यदि सत्यमेवैतन्मन्त्रराजश्रवणेनैव मानवो मुक्तिं लभेत, तद्वहूनां मोक्षपथमहं
निरर्गलीकृतवान् इति धन्योऽस्मि । देहान्ते सर्वे ते परमपदभाजः सुखं स्थास्यन्ति । यदि माहशाघम-
जनस्याकिञ्चित्करेण कायक्लेशेन बहवो जनाः परमपदं लभन्ते, तदा मम नरकगमनं शतवारमा-
काङ्क्षितम् ।¹

Ramanuja has complete faith in God. He never likes to pick up a quarrel with those wretched pandits who snatched the Baudhāyanavṛtti. On the contrary he calmly hands over to them the book which he had procured due to the blessings of Goddess Sarasvatī herself. This becomes clear from the words of Kuresh, his pupil, who accompanied him to Kashmir.

कुरेशः— यष्ट्यासिना वा किम् ? किन्तु यूयमेवास्य ग्रन्थस्य स्वत्वाधिकारिण इत्यत्र किं
प्रमाणम् । ग्रन्थ एष मम गुरवे स्वयं सरस्वतीदेव्या प्रदत्तः ।²

“Kuresh : What have you to do with stick or sword ? But what proof is there that you alone are the real owners of this book ? This book was presented to my teacher by goddess Sarasvatī herself.”

Ramanuja is able to comment on the Baudhāyanavṛtti due to the sharp memory of his pupil Kuresh, who had learnt it by heart in the short period of a month.

Ramanuja has a wonderful power to bring round people to his faith. Dhanurdas, one of his acquaintances, is extremely attached to a beautiful woman Hemamiba but Ramanuja makes him one of the great Viṣṇu Bhaktas by his magnetic power.

1. Eleventh act, p. 51.

2. Twelfth act, p. 53.

Dīnadāsaraghunātham

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Dīnadāsaraghunātham* is written by J. B. Chaudhuri. It deals with the life of Raghunath, a saintly person of saptagram (Kṛṣṇapura). It has twelve acts and seventy pages and is published from the pracyavani, Calcutta in the year 1962.

PLOT

First act—After prastāvanā in the first act Raghunath's mother is shown searching for her daughter-in-law. She loves her very much and cannot bear even a moment's separation from her. Somebody tells her that she is coming to see her. She is full of praise for her. Says she, "though she is young, she performs her religious duties very faithfully." When a pallivāsinī (village-woman) hears this, she too speaks highly of her. In the meantime there comes the daughter-in-law. Both the pallivāsinī and the mother-in-law bless her. After sometime the pallivāsinī is informed that she has to go to some other place soon. She and the mother-in-law both leave that place. The daughter-in-law is alone when Raghunath comes. They both have a talk with each other for a shortwhile.

Raghunath's father and mother like their son to be a worldly man and give up the idea of becoming a sannyāsin. Raghunath's mother says that she has arranged for all the luxuries which may lure him and it is possible that he may begin to lead a normal worldly life hereafter. While they are talking thus Raghunath comes and tells them about the instructions and blessings of chaitanya Mahaprābhū. The wife of Raghunath also joins them in conversation. After sometime Raghunath's father and mother go out leaving Raghunath and his wife alone. They both talk about matters religious. Raghunath is firm in his resolve of leading a saintly life. His wife also pledges to sacrifice everything in order to become a worthy wife of a worthy husband.

Muslim residents of Raghunath's place do not take kindly to his activities. Chaudhuri, a Muslim landlord, deprives Raghunath's father and uncle of their belongings. Both of them run away to save their life. Raghunath voluntarily hands over himself to Mohammedans and is put behind the bars. He has no

worry so far he is concerned; he is only anxious about his father and uncle. He can do nothing except to pray to mother Rādhā for help. Meanwhile Ujira, a Mohammedan attendant, comes and asks Raghunath to disclose the place of hiding of his father and uncle failing which he would be punished heavily. Raghunath gladly accepts the punishment, but refuses to oblige his opponents. Ujira is about to punish him. Just at that time Chaudhuri himself comes. He is filled with affection to see the beautiful and glowing face of Raghunath. He not only releases Raghunath but also adopts him as his son and makes him an heir to his property.

On the other hand Raghunāth's mother is shown to be highly worried about her son. Even her husband's soothing words have no affect on her.

Second act—Raghunath comes to Nityanandaprabhu. Both are very happy to meet each other. Nityanandaprabhu arranges the 'Daṇḍamahotsava', the Punishment Session, to punish Raghunath for having come to see him so late. The 'Daṇḍamahotsava' is announced throughout the country. The Session is gone through with all formalities. The Mahaprabhu himself comes and blesses Raghunath. Raghunath spends the night with Gadadhara-prabhu. All the people assembled there spend their time dancing and singing.

Third act—Govardhanadas knows that his son Raghunath is not an ordinary man and is all the time engaged in meditation. But he poses before his wife as if he knows nothing. His wife tells him that their son always appears to be in a pensive mood. Govardhandas, though knowing everything, says that he does not know anything about the matter and both she and their daughter-in-law should discuss among themselves the cause of Raghunath's indifference towards worldly affairs. Raghunath's wife frankly tells her mother-in-law that her husband is engaged in meditation all the time and that she considers herself fortunate in having a husband like him. Her mother-in-law is furious at this and blames her daughter-in-law for Raghunath's aversion for worldly life. She even uses harsh words for her and in a huff goes out.

Fourth act—Raghunath leaves for Puri all alone without having even a single penny with him and without telling anybody anything about it. On the way some robbers catch hold of him and ask him to hand over to them all that he has. When he says that he has nothing with him they decide to kill him but the timely approach of the wife of the head of the robbers saves him.

Fifth act—Raghunath reaches Mahaprabhu after twelve days though usually

it takes at least fifteen days. Mukunda, Swarupa, Mahaprabhu—all praise Raghunath for being so earnest and eager for Sannyāsa. Raghunath tells them that he has been on the move for twelve days continuously. He did not have any sleep on the way and took food for only four times.

Sixth act—Govinda and Swarupa, two disciples of Mahaprabhu, inform him that Raghunath is lying before the temple of Jagannath since three or four days. If somebody gives him something to eat he would eat otherwise he lies there without taking anything. He is brought up in luxuries and now if he does not take care of his health he would lose it. This pleases Mahaprabhu for he knows that a true devotee is only one who can leave everything to the mercy of God. Mahaprabhu is himself eager to see him and give him certain instructions to proceed further on the path of devotion.

Seventh act—Mahaprabhu is very much pleased to see Raghunath's utmost faith in God. Swarupa informs Mahaprabhu that Govardhanadas, the father of Raghunath, has sent two servants to look after Raghunath but he does not need their services. He has refused the money which his father has sent him. Earlier he used to take eight annas and feed Mahaprabhu but later he refused that also because he did not think it fit to feed his guru with the money which he knows is not pure.

Mahaprabhu is happy to know all this. He offers him two things 'Govardhanaśilā' and 'Guñjāmālā' both personifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā respectively. Raghunath is very much pleased to have these from his guru. Swarupa too gives Raghunath a pair of clothes and the title 'Ekāyanaskandhī', Raghunath receives all the gifts thankfully.

Eighth act —Raghunath's mother loses her mental balance due to separation from her son. She condemns her daughter-in-law and says that she is the root cause of all her miseries. It is she who permitted Raghunath to take to Sannyāsa. Balaramacharya, one of their acquaintances, tries to console her but to no avail. Govardhanadas is also very much worried on account of his son and daughter-in-law. He bewails his lot. 'Sometime before I had everything - a loving wife, an obedient son, a good daughter-in-law, and huge wealth, but now I have nothing', says he. His daughter-in-law, however, consoles him. At last Govardhanadas is pacified and says that with such a good daughter-in-law nothing is lost really.

Ninth act —Shri Sanatana, Shri Rupa, Shri Jiva and Shri Gopalabhatta are shown discussing the spiritual qualifications of Raghunath. They also refer

to 'Govardhanaśilā' and 'Guṇjāmālā' which Mahaprabhu gave him shortly before his (Mahaprabhu's) death. All the people assembled there show their concern at Mahaprabhu's and Swarup's having left them at the same time. But they are happy that they have with them Raghunath, the true spiritual heir of Haridas. Mahaprabhu accepts happily the contaminated food which Raghunath offers him respectfully.

Tenth act — Shri Rupa, Sanatana and Goswamin all praise the ascetic qualifications of Raghunath. They also say that it is very difficult for a person to practice penance when he has spent his childhood and early age in complete luxury. They discuss many problems with Raghunath which he ably solves. He also solves the mystery of the crookedness of Śyāma-Kuṇḍa.

Eleventh act—Raghunath is sad because his colleagues, Shri Rupa, Sanatana and Goswamin have left the world. He feels very lonely. He does not want to live but he has no control over his death. Krishnadas Kaviraj asks him why he prefers the worship of Rādhā to Kṛṣṇa. Raghunath tells him that Mahaprabhu preferred the worship of 'Mātṛ Śakti' (the power of motherhood). He has learnt this worship from his guru.

Twelfth act —Mother Jahnavi comes to see Raghunath. Raghunath enquires about his Bengali brothers. She tells him that everybody is well there but she is sad to learn that all the great souls have left for heaven one by one. Raghunath has now settled in Vrindaban. Jahnavi is reminded of his mother and wife. They both discuss about the types of devotion. After this Raghunath utters the Bharatavākya and with it the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Raghunath, the main figure of the present play, is a devotee of God. He is the only son of a wealthy man but who cares for this worldly wealth when one is blessed with unlimited spiritual wealth ? His mother, little knowing of her son's high spiritual propensities, wants to bind him with worldly objects but as he is destined to go very high sensual pleasures fail to attract him. Fortunately for him Raghunath has a wife who understands him and helps him in his meditation. Even Raghunath's father feels proud of having such a son.

Raghunath is so eager to reach Puri that he leaves for that place on foot. He does not have even a single penny with him to meet the travel expenses. He is a fearless young man who knows how to face even death. While going to Puri some robbers try to kill him. He is fearless and prepa-

red to meet with death. Fortunately the timely approach of the wife of the head of the robbers saves him.

By the grace of Lord he is able to perform superhuman acts. He covers the vast distances in an extraordinarily short time. Mahaprabhu, his guru, is so much pleased with his devotion that he gives him 'Govardhanaśilā' and 'Guñjāmālā' as gifts.

He spends his later life in Vṛndāvana and devotes himself to the meditation on the Lord.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

One of the most prolific writers of the twentieth century J. B. Chaudhuri has written on many branches of ancient Indian lore. He is a scholar, playwright and poet all rolled into one. So far he has written twenty six Sanskrit plays out of which some ten are available. Except one or two all of these are based upon the holy lives of the well known men and women devotees, saints and scholars. The author has propagated the *bhakti-dharma* through the easily intelligible and vastly popular medium of songs and drama. But this never should mean that they lack originality on that score. They are all based on painstaking research. For collection of materials the author has depended on authentic sources, ancient and modern. This material he has woven into a pattern. With his genius he has given it a dramatic garb. It is this combination in him of the research scholar and the playwright that singles him out as one of the great playwrights of the present century.

Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri has many firsts to his credit. He is the first to compose Sanskrit dramas, being an ardent votary of the Mother Principle of India, on the Līlā-saṅginīs or holy consorts of all the Yugāvatāras or incarnations of gods in different ages-Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, viz. Sītā, Rādhā, Yaśodharā, Viṣṇu-priyā and Sārādāmaṇi. He is the first to write a play on the divine life of Sri Aurobindo. This is the first attempt of its kind not only in Sanskrit but in all languages. He is the first to write a play, the Mahāmayabhāratam, on the irrigation policy of India.¹

J. B. Chaudhuri's plays have a unique beauty of diction. They are written in simple Sanskrit easily intelligible to Indians with average education. It has been the author's aim to popularize Sanskrit among all sections

1. Ishwar chandra Vidyasagar claims that J.B. Chaudhuri is the first to write a Mahānāṭaka after the Hanumannāṭaka. But this claim of his seems to be rather far-fetched. He probably is not aware of a Mahānāṭaka Śivajīcaritam. by Hari-dāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa in this very century itself.

of people of India by means of dance and drama. Says he :

नाटकसङ्गीतादिमाध्यमेन संस्कृतस्य भूयसा प्रचारं वयं वाञ्छामः ।¹

This aim he knew could be realized only by writing in easy and simple Sanskrit. "The easy flow of Sanskrit must not find an impediment in the rocky thickets of obsolete words or crosscurrents of peculiar uses." Says he.

It is probably this aim of his to be intelligible even to the common man that is responsible for his giving the go-by to Prakrits. In none of his plays he employs it.

An innovation that he introduces in some of his plays pertains to technique. He divides the acts into scenes. By the very nature of themes he cannot bring harmony and cohesion to them. There is no unity of time and place too. Very often the description of the activities in the whole life span of a character is dramatized. This of course leads to condensation which requires the treatment of the important facets only which in that case means a jumbled mass of loosely-knit incidents, the only point uniting them being their pertaining to one character. While going through the dramas of Chaudhuri one cannot help avoid the impression that one is reading the biographies; the plays are only dramatic biographies. There is as a matter of fact little of dramatic element in them, little of suspense, little of melodrama. If J. B. Chaudhuri could have woven the incident into an interesting pattern he would have definitely given us literature which would have been matchless. It is really funny to see high philosophy being discussed on the stage as in the *Vimalayatīndram* where the different interpretations of certain *mantras* as offered by Yadavaprakash and Ramanuja are found given.

Even then whatever Chaudhuri has done is really commendable. Writing dramas on historical personages is by no means an easy task. The author has to see to it that they do in no case remain a mere history or biography, a mere statement of dry dates and facts. He has also to see that they do not degenerate into mere fiction or fantasy, soaring only on the wings of imagination, however sweet and charming. In the present case J.B. Chaudhuri has taken particular care to steer clear of the two extremes. He has tried to enliven his dramas with a number of songs and poems. How much he has succeeded in this is, however, a matter of opinion.

1. *Mahāprabhuharidāsam*, First act, p. 3.

Again the devotional aspect of the plays is too prominent to look rather propagandist. This should not mean that we are not in favour of devotion or *bhakti*. Its introduction in a drama too we do not object. But what we do object to is the too much of directness with which it is done. It should have flown out of the plays rather than flowing into them.

As said above J. B. Chaudhuri writes easy Sanskrit, but that does not mean that his expression is all flat. As one of the modern critics has pointed out "J.B. Chaudhuri's language is.....very simple, yet dignified; true to the point, yet sweet; modern, yet following the ancient rules—his language and style are wholly his own and permanent contributions to Sanskrit literature as such."

The works of J.B. Chaudhuri abound in verses. An idea may be had of this from the fact that even in a single work like the *Ānandarādhām* there are as many as 236 verses. These verses are composed in a variety of metres, both long and short. There is nowhere any trace of forcible composition in his verses. They have a natural flow and sometimes fine poetry clothed in flawless expression. The poet not infrequently, may be for a change, leaves the philosophical discussions and his obsession with *bhakti* and comes to have a poetical flight. He also gives us fine descriptions of the places or things as also the various timings, the morning, midday, dusk, midnight etc. As an example we may mention the description of *Vṛndāvana* as given in the following verses wherein the author shows his familiarity with the names of the large variety of trees :

मल्लिकामालतीजातीसप्तपर्णसुशोभिता ।

लवङ्गसप्तलायूथीलवलीवल्लरीयुता ॥

हिन्तालतालवकुलामलकीतमाल-

खर्जूर-सर्ज-वट-भूर्जककुष्माण्डः ।

मन्दार-तिन्दु-हरिचन्दन-तिन्तिडीकैः

इयामा निरुद्धशशिसूर्यकरप्रसारा ॥¹

More poetic, however, is the description of Kashmir in the *Vimala-yatīndram* :

रामानुजः —समागतोऽस्मि काश्मीरं भूस्वर्गम् । अहो अपूर्वमत्र नैसर्गिकं दृश्यम् । भगवान् विश्वस्य सर्वं प्राकृतिकं सौन्दर्यं पिण्डीकतुमना अतिक्रमितुमना वा कच्चि-

1. *Ānandarādhām*, Second act, pp. 21-22.

त्सर्वसौन्दर्यातिशयमत्रैव ततान ? एकत उत्तुङ्गहिमाचलशृङ्गभूभागोऽन्यतश्च
वेगवती तटिनीधारा, सर्वत्र नीलनीलिमराशिः, स्थाने स्थाने च तुषारस्तूप-
विभूषिता पर्वतचूडा । गायन्ति शतं पक्षिणः ; अदूरतः प्रवहति भीषण-
गर्जनेन स्रोतस्विनी । असंख्यातानि पुष्पाणि नयनविलोभनानि सर्वत्र
प्रस्फुटितानि । का नामेयं विभूतिः, किनामकं वैतत् सौन्दर्यं, पृथिव्यां कुत्र
वाऽस्य तुलनम् ?¹

“Ramanuja—I have come to Kashmir, the veritable heaven on the earth. Is it that God desirous of condensing or excelling created here itself the essence of the beauty of each and everything. On the one hand there are the lofty peaks of the Himalayas and on the other a swift current of water. There is greenery everywhere, at every place. There are mountain ranges adorned with thick snow. Hundreds of birds sing, not far from this place a river flows on with a terrible roar. Numerous flowers please the eye and are in bloom everywhere. What is this grandeur ? What is this beauty ? Where else on earth could this have its match ?”

Equally charming is the description of Dakṣiṇeśvara in the Śakti-sāradam :

अपूर्वमिदं स्थानम्—

ऊर्ध्वं पीयूषवर्षी हसति हिमकरो निम्नतः पुण्यतोया
शान्तस्निग्धोर्मिरम्या बहति कुलुकुलुध्वानिनी जह्नु कन्या ।
अग्रेऽसौ शुभ्रकान्तिर्वसति शुचितनुस्तापसो रामकृष्णो
योगादेतत्त्रयाणां स्थलमिदमभवत् पावनं तीर्थभूतम् ॥²

“Unique is this place—

Above shines the moon shedding nectar, below flows the murmuring river Ganges with its holy waters, charming on account of its unruffled and even waves. There yonder in front of us lives the hermit Ramakrishna with a pure body radiating bright lustre. With the combination of these three this place has turned into a sacred one, a veritable centre of pilgrimage.”

Pleasant in the same way is the description of the Gonda forest in the Vimalayatindram.

1. Vimalayatindram, Thirteenth act, p. 60.
2. Śaktisāradam. Fifth act, p. 40.

प्रवहति शिखराग्रान्निर्भरोज्यं पुरस्ता-
 दयमिह मृगशावः प्राप्तवान् पातुमम्भः ।
 विशति न तरुषण्डच्छादितायामटव्या-
 मिह मिहिरमयूखः क्षीणदीप्तिः प्रभाते ॥¹

"This place gives a very charming appearance on account of the full play of Nature.

This waterfall yonder is flowing down from the peak of the mountain, this young one of a deer has come to it here to drink its water. The rays of the Sun with little of lustre in them at the time of the morning do not enter the forest with a thick overgrowth of trees."

Among the descriptions of the timings we may first take up that of the early morning when the night slips into dawn :

पश्य इयं यामिनी सत्यं दिवसायते—

ध्वान्ति क्वापि विलीनमद्य सहसा बाह्यं तथाभ्यन्तरं
 सञ्चारः पशुपक्षिणामनुदिशं संलोक्यते वारितः ।
 वस्तूनामपि नास्ति दर्शनविधौ बाधा वितारं वियद्
 आकुञ्चन्नलिनीमुखैः कुमुदिनीहासैर्मिश्रा नीयते ॥²

"See, this night is turning into the day.

The darkness, both internal and external, has just disappeared somewhere. The unobstructed movement of the birds and the animals can be seen on every side. There is no difficulty in apprehending the objects. The sky is without the stars. The night is carried away by the smiling water-lilies while the lotuses are closing."

We meet with the description of the midday in the Vimalayatīndram in the verse.

अहो कठोरोज्यं मध्याह्नकालः—

मध्यं मध्याह्नसूर्यो वियत उपगतस्तीक्ष्णतीक्ष्णैर्मयूखै-
 र्भोमान् सर्वान् पदार्थान् दहनं इव दहत्युग्रमूर्तिं प्रपन्नः ।
 अस्योग्रा मूर्तिरेषा गुरुगृहवसतिं स्मारयत्यंशतो नः
 शिष्यानध्यापकोऽपि श्लपयति नियतं यद् दुरुक्तेन कामम् ॥³

"Oh, terrible is this time of the noon. The midday sun assuming a

1. Vimalayatīndram, Second act, p. 10.

2. Anandarādhām, Third act, p. 55.

3. Vimalayatīndram, First act, p. 5.

terrible form and having arrived in the middle of the sky burns all the earthly objects. Its terrible form makes us remember partly the days spent in the house of the teacher (*guru*), for the teacher too fully causes uneasiness to his pupils by using harsh words."

The description of the dusk we meet with in the following verse of the Mahāprabhuharidāsam which is characterized by Pun too :

क्लान्तोऽत्यन्तं दिनसमटनाद् भास्करो रक्तचित्तः
 प्राचीप्रेमस्मरणविधुरो भावनाभारलिप्तः ।
 नक्षत्राली-हृदय-लिपिका-वर्जनैकान्तचिन्तो
 नेत्रे मुद्रात्यहह भटिति म्लापयित्वा हि सन्ध्याम् ॥¹

"Oh the Sun, red in form (or impassioned), highly wearied, oblivious of the thoughts of love with the eastern quarter, carrying the weight of emotion and having the sole worry of obliterating the script (engraved) on the heart of the rows of the stars is closing its eyes making the dusk vanish."

More imaginative is, however, the description :

सन्ध्याकुलाङ्गना वीक्ष्य शशाङ्कं सुस्मिताननम् ।
 दीपशिखाच्छलाद्देवी विशति स्वनिकेतनम् ॥²

"The dusk, the noble family woman, having come to see the smiling moon is entering her home in the form of the flame of the lamps."

Not only in the descriptions of nature or places, in the delineation of human emotions too the author seems to be at his best. In his plays lie interspersed a number of touching scenes. They are valuable in that they provide us a peep into the human psychology.

Thus when Haridāsa dies Mahāprabhu feels very sad. He bewails his death in the most pathetic words. The sorrow of his heart flows out in the form of the following verse ;

शून्यं पश्याम्यद्यन्यो निखिलमपि जगन्निष्फलं कृष्णनाम
 प्राणान् शल्यायमानान् सकलसहचरान् भावये शोचनीयान् ।
 कार्ये कस्मिन्नपीच्छा न भवति चलतो नापि पाणी च पादौ
 निर्याणं सन्निकृष्टं प्रियतमहरिदासस्य संचिन्त्य चित्ते ॥³

"I, the wretched fellow, find the whole world empty. Kṛṣṇa's name has no value in it; I look upon my life, piercing me like arrows and everybody's

1. Mahāprabhuharidāsam, Second act, p. 15.

2. Ibid., Second act, p. 15.

3. Ibid, Seventh act, p. 72.

companion as worthy of pity. I just do not like to do anything, my hand and feet refuse to work, when I think in my mind of the death of Haridāsa that has just taken place."

The author embellishes his works with a number of Subhāṣitas too, a few of the most delightful of which are reproduced below :

- (क) यावत्यस्तु विपद् घोरा क्षयस्तस्य न दुर्लभः ।
गगनं तमसाच्छन्नं सूचयत्यरुणोदयम् ॥¹
- (ख) कारागारं वरागारं पादस्पर्शान्महात्मनः ।
चामीकरायते लोहं स्पर्शान् स्पर्शमणोद्भवं ॥²
- (ग) अचिन्तितं क्वचिदुपैति चिन्तितमपि नश्यति पश्यतोऽस्य ।
नरस्य किं स्वातन्त्र्यं जयतीह भागवती करुणा ॥³

The author's language is characterized by a fair degree of alliteration at places. As examples we may mention the following :

- (क) अघटनघटनपटीयसी ।⁴
- (ख) अहो पश्य, कमलकोमलं, पल्लवपेलवं तव पादयुगलम् ।⁵
- (ग) कावेर्यपि प्रवरवेरभयं भिनत्ति ।⁶
- (घ) परिहाय शोकजल्पं कल्पस्व तदन्तिमवाञ्छापूर्त्यै ।⁷
- (ङ) न तनुते दारेष्वगारेषु च ।⁸

This alliteration is seen to be at its best in the very large number of songs—mostly in the free style known as Mukṭaka—which are to be met with in Chaudhuri's works. Some of these are of the type of the Bhajanas and Kīrtanas. The author seems to attach great importance to them. That is why through the mouth of Haridāsa he says :

कलौ संकीर्तनप्रायैर्गजन्ति हि सुमेघसः ।⁹

"In Kali the wise people worship God by means of uttering his praises (Kīrtanas) only." He is a true Bhakta. The following lines may well reflect his own thinking :

1. Ibid, Third act, p. 29.
2. Ibid, Third act, p. 30
3. Bhāratahṛdayāravindam, First act, p. 8.
4. Śaktisāradam, First act, p. 5.
5. Ibid, Third act, p. 21.
6. Vimalayatīndram, Fifth act, p. 19.
7. Ibid, Seventh act, p. 30.
8. Ibid, Ninth act, p. 37.
9. Mahāprabhuhaṛidāsam, Third act, p. 14.

भक्तिमुखं सुखान्मुक्तेः सर्वथा हि विशिष्यते ।

भक्ता मुक्तिं न वाञ्छन्ति भक्तेस्तेषां हि याचनम् ।¹

"The joy of devotion far exceeds the joy of salvation. The devotees do not aspire for salvation. They only seek devotion."

Music to the author is his very life blood. While talking of it he says :

सङ्गीतमेव मर्मवाणी प्राणिनाम् । . . . सङ्गीतमेव स्वल्पभाषया मानवहृदयस्य सूक्ष्मतम-
भावप्रकाशि सुचिरस्थायि स्वत एव जगज्जनमनोहारि च ।

तत्त्वकण्टकितं ज्ञानं सङ्गीतं मधुकोमलम् ।

सङ्गीतमुच्च-तत्त्वात्म-ज्ञानं च ललितामृतम् ॥

ओङ्कारो ज्ञानसङ्गीत-साधनापरमद्युतिः ।

निखिलं भुवनं व्याप्य तद् वहिश्च सदा स्थितः ॥²

It is this love of his for music that explains the inordinately large number of songs in his plays. They make a very pleasant reading producing a jingle on account of the juxtaposition of the like sounds. We would do well to close our critique on the plays of J. B. Chaudhuri with a reproduction by way of a specimen of a song from each one of his plays.

(क) अहो कालीरूपं चेतोहरणम् ।

अरूपस्वरूपं षडैश्वर्यरूपम्

योगिजनभावनासर्जनम् ॥

मूलाधारसहस्रारे जनन्या मम विहारे

योगिनां सहजमननम् ।

हंसीस्वरूपिणी कालिका श्रीजननी

नित्यं या हंसविलोभनम् ॥³

(ख) अहं दासानुदासः त्वं विश्वजनाश्वासः

हरिदासस्तव दासो युगयुगदासः ।

भक्त-लक्ष-कोटिमय सद्यः कृपादानलय-

भुवनैकसमाश्रय- नदीयाविलासः ।

तव हेतोः प्रभुवरसुन्दर-प्रकाशः ॥⁴

1. Ibid., First act.

2. Mahāprabhuharidāsam, First act, p. 7.

3. Śaktisāradam, Fifth act, p. 46.

4. Mahāprabhuharidāsam, Fourth act, p. 37

(ग) भारतजननी स्नेहप्रसूविणी सिद्धिशिरोमणिभारते रे ।
 फुल्लं जायन्ते युगे युगान्ते रामकृष्णौ च बुद्धगौरौ रे ॥
 विश्वसर्वहिता जननी श्रीसीता-राधा-गोपा-विष्णुप्रियाः ।
 प्रभुकरधृताः कल्याणभूषिता जिष्णुविष्णुभवहितधिया ॥
 हृदया रविन्द-मधुनिष्यन्दः कलौ बहवु भारते प्राणासारे
 भारतमातृमणे हस क्षणे क्षणे दूरं यातु दुःखं मातः सारात् सारे ॥¹

(घ) निगमागमप्रमे ? तमोदलनि !
 मधुरमोहनवीणावादिनि !
 वारिण स्फटिकमालाधारिणि
 करुणामसृण-कमलविलोकिनि ॥
 कुन्दकर्पूरधवलहासिनि
 सौम्ये सारदे सारदायिनि ।
 श्वेतकमलामलदलविहारिणि
 सितचन्दनचर्चित-वरवर्णिनि
 भजानि भारति भास्वति भरणि ॥²

(ङ) रिरिनिरिनिनिम्नीणी किङ्किणी-कङ्कणानां
 रिरि-म्नि-सिमिरावो गीतनृत्याश्रयाणाम् ।
 तथि तथि तथि ताथै ता तथै थै तथै थो
 धिगिति धिगिति नादो राधिके राजतां नः ॥³

(च) भवानि भवानि जनि-हृदयमणिर्
 ईश्वरीमुतो धरणि-लावणी ।
 नाहं कुशली दयस्व जननि
 वाञ्छालतिके सर्वप्रदायिनि ॥
 तावकलीला पूर्णमाधुरी
 नारी देवी देवी नारी ।
 अक्षयाऽव्यया नित्यसहचरी
 दानपराम्बा जगत ईश्वरी ॥⁴

1. Bhāratahṛdayaravindam, Second act, pp. 14-15.
2. Vimalayatindram, Twelfth act, p. 54
3. Ānandarādhām, Second act, p. 24
4. Bhāskarodayam, Ninth act, p. 62.

(छ) जलदश्यामं नयनारामं वन्दे नन्दनन्दनम्
 पीतसुवसनं स्मितमुशोभनं चारुचन्दनचर्चनम् ।
 विश्ववाञ्छनं वत्सलाञ्छनं वनमालाविभूषणम्
 मणिमनोहरं मधुमञ्जीरं मञ्जुमुरलीमोहनम् ॥¹

1. Dīnadāsaraghunātham, Seventh act, p. 51.

Prekṣanakatrayī

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Written by Dr. V. Raghavan, 'Prekṣanakatrayī' deals with the life of three poetesses of Sanskrit literature. Dr. P.V. Kane while writing a foreword to the book says—

"In the present work he has skilfully presented in a dramatic form what little is known about three Sanskrit poetesses, Vijjikā (or Vidyā), Vikāṇitambā and Avantisundarī, and has woven into the plays the very fine verses that are attributed to these poetesses in Sanskrit anthologies."

In the general introduction to the three Vignettes collectively called Prekṣanakatrayī, Dr. Raghavan gives us an insight into the working of his mind which prompted him to go in for these and the system and the method that he followed in creating them :

"The three Vignettes presented in the following pages relate to the life and personality of three women whose names illumine the pages of Sanskrit literature, Vijayāṅkā (Vijjikā) and Vikāṇitambā, the foremost Sanskrit poetesses of the classical age, and Avantisundarī the learned wife of the poet and critic Rājaśekhara.

No complete work of either of these poetesses has come down to us but some verses of theirs are preserved in the anthologies. Avantisundarī wrote no work, but her opinions on literary matters and interest in literary activities are recorded in her husband's work. Utilising the verses in the citations and references in the Alāṅkāra works I have imaginatively worked out the situations; and enriching the text with authentic lines, echoes and ideas from the writings of these ladies and other related writers, I have tried to capture in the presentation the spirit and atmosphere of the old Sanskrit literary circles, the *goṣṭhis*, in which Kavis and Sahṛdayas mingled and mutually cherished their twin arts of creation and criticism."

VIJAYĀṆKĀ

Introductory—The writer has given a short introduction of each poetess in the beginning. About Vijayāṅkā he says :

Vijayāṅkā, is the foremost among the ancient women poetesses of the classic age of Sanskrit poetry. No full poem of this poetess has survived,

but stray examples of her fine poetry have been preserved in the anthologies, and works on rhetoric also give a glimpse of her personality. It is indeed high praise for her to have been placed by the critic Rājaśekhara by the side of Kālidāsa himself. Known as Vidyā, Vijjikā or Vijayāṅkā, this poetess has been identified with the queen of Pulikeśin II in the later part of the 7th Century A. D. A verse speaking of her swarthy complexion confirms her Dekhan or Southern home."

PLOT

The court poet is busy reading a book in the Sarasvatīmandira, in the palace of King Candrāditya. The king comes and after paying respects to the learned poet asks about his (king's) wife, who he thinks might be having a literary discussion with the court poet. But she is not to be found there. After a while the queen Vijayāṅkā appears there. All the three have a free and frank discussion about many literary problems. Vijayāṅkā criticizes even the great poets and critics. All are very happy and impressed by the sound judgment of Vijayāṅkā.

CHARACTERIZATION

Vijayāṅkā—ranks very high among Sanskrit poetesses. Her poetic capabilities are very high. Her girl friend praises her in the following words :

सरस्वतीव कार्णाटी विजयाङ्का जयत्यसौ ।

या वैदर्भगिरां वासः कालिदासादनन्तरम् ॥¹

"Victorious is that Vijayāṅkā of the Kārṇāṭa country who is like Sarasvatī and is the dwelling place of the Vaidarbhī style after Kālidāsa."

She is herself proud of her literary attainments and considers herself superior to all other poets except Brahmā, Vālmīki and Vyāsa. We can get an idea of her arrogance from the following verse of hers which we reproduce below :

एकोऽभून्नलिनात्, ततश्च पुलिनात्. वल्मीकतश्चापरः

ते सर्वे कवयो भवन्ति गुरवः, तेभ्यो नमस्कुर्महे ।

अर्वाञ्चो यदि गद्यपद्यरचनैश्चेतः चमत्कुर्वते

तेषां मूर्ध्नि ददामि वामचरणं कर्णाटराजप्रिया ॥²

"One was born of lotus (Brahmā), another from the bank of a river (Vyāsa) and still another from the ant-hill (Vālmīki). All these poets are

1. Vijayāṅkā, p 7.

2. Ibid, p 4.

my *gurus*. I bow to them. If the recent poets charm the mind by their prose or poetic compositions, I, the beloved of the king of Karnaṭa, place my left foot on their heads."

Vijayāṅkā seems to have been a South Indian as is indicated by her complexion spoken of by her own self in the following words :

नीलोत्पलदलश्यामां विज्जिकां मामजानता ।

वृथैव दण्डिना प्रोक्तं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती ॥¹

"Not knowing me Vijjikā, dark as the blue lotus petal, did Daṇḍin say wrongly that Sarasvatī is all white."

VIKAṬANITAMBĀ

Introductory—The writer has introduced Vikaṭanitambā in the following words :

"Vikaṭanitambā stands next to Vijjikā. Of this poetess again no full work has survived but we are able to have glimpses of her and her writings from anthologies and works of Alaṅkāraśāstra which speak of her.

In the anthologies six verses of hers are quoted. In them we see the hand of a master of the classical style; the chief characteristic of her writing is the somewhat frank manner in which she speaks of the moods and situations of love.

From one of these verses we can infer that she was associated with one Govindasvāmin who was probably her guru.

From another quotation presented in some Alaṅkāra works, we have an insight into her unfortunate private life. For a poetess of her accomplishments, Fate was hard enough to give an illiterate husband who could not even mouth Sanskrit properly."

PLOT

The poetess Vikaṭanitambā is sitting in a room, with a pen in her hand. Her friend is by her side. Meanwhile her teacher Govindasvāmin comes there. He is very much impressed by her talents. Vikaṭanitambā reads her poem to Govindasvāmin for his scrutiny. Govindasvāmin is very much impressed by her flawless composition. He further says that he would be a most fortunate man who marries such an intelligent girl. At this remark Vikaṭanitambā says that she feels that she would be married to a foolish man. Meanwhile her friend brings the news that her father has settled her marriage. Vikaṭanitambā indifferently answers that she has already selec-

1 Vijayāṅkā, p. 4.

ted poetry itself as her husband and now there is no need for her marriage. But unfortunately her father is firm in his decision and she is married to a foolish man who cannot pronounce such simple Sanskrit words as *kleśa*, *suṣṭhu*, *māṣa* and *uṣṭra* correctly. After marriage when the friends of Vikaṭānitambā ask him his name he instead of telling them his proper name, says that he is the husband of Vikaṭānitambā. He usually answers all questions in Prakrit. The guru of Vikaṭānitambā, Govindasvāmin is very much pained to see the misfortune of his favourite pupil.

Vikaṭānitambā—too is a well known poetess of ancient India. She is given to literary pursuits. Even Govindasvāmin, her teacher, recognizes her literary talents. Though he is her teacher still he considers her to be his equal. The following dialogue would clearly bear it out :

विकटनितम्बा—(उत्थाय) आचार्य, वन्दे ।

गोविन्दस्वामी—अलमुपचारेण । विद्याप्रकर्षात् त्वामाचार्योऽप्यहं सखीं भावयामि ।
पठ्यतां श्लोकः । त्वरते मे हृदयं त्वदीयसारस्वतमुधास्वादनाय ।

“Vikaṭānitambā—(Getting up), I bow to thee.

Govindasvāmin—Enough of formalities. On account of your superiority in learning, I, though your teacher, look upon you as my friend. Please recite the verse. I am eager to hear your melodious verses.”

She is a poet of a very high order. Her description of an *abhisārikā* going out in the darkness of the night has elicited high praise at the hands of critics. To the question as to whether she is not afraid of going out all alone at the dead of night she gives a very clever reply which brings out in full the poetess in her :

क्व प्रस्थितासि करभोरु घने निशीथे

प्राणाधिको वसति यत्र मनःप्रियो मे ।

एकाकिनी वद कथं न विभेषि बाले

नन्वस्ति पुङ्खितशरो मदनस्सहायः ॥²

“O you with tapering thighs, where are you going at the dead of night ? (I am going there) where my lover, dearer to me than my life even, lives. O girl, tell me, are you not afraid of being all alone ? Well, I have cupid with his feathery arrows as my companion.”

Another of her verses which she relates to her teacher through her

1. Vikaṭānitambā, pp. 2-3.

2. Ibid, p. 3.

singer-friend too is very beautiful :

किं द्वारि देवहतिके सहकारकेण

संवर्धितेन विषवृक्षक एष पापः ।

यस्मिन् मनागपि विकासविकारभाजि

घोरा भवन्ति मदनज्वरसंनिपाताः ॥¹

"O, you the unfortunate woman, what is it to you that you raise a mango tree at your door. This tree, the wretched one, is poisonous. When there is even a slight change in it in the form of blossoming there are terrible attacks of the fever of love."

Though herself a talented lady she has some prescience that her husband would be an idiot. If it happens how would she pull on with him. It is this fear to which she gives expression in the following lines :

यस्य षष्ठी चतुर्थी च विहस्य च विहाय च

अहं कथं द्वितीया स्याद् द्वितीया स्यामहं कथम् ॥²

"For whom *vihasya* and *vihāya* are the forms of the genitive and the dative respectively how can I marry him? How *aham* be a form of the *dvitīyā*, the accusative case."

But that is the misfortune of the lady. Her fears prove to be true. She gets a blockhead as her husband.

AVANTISUNDARĪ

Introductory—The author introduces Avantisundarī in the following lines : "Avantisundarī is the learned wife of the poet, playwright and critic Rājaśekhara, poet laureate of the Cedi and the Kanauj courts. Rājaśekhara (Circa 900 A.D.) is the author of three plays, a long poem and a voluminous work of literary criticism called the *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*. In one of his plays the *Karpūramañjarī* written entirely in Prakrit he says it was produced at the instance of his wife Avantisundarī. That she was an eminent literary figure we learn more specifically from her husband's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* where he records her opinions on three questions in literary criticism, viz; the question of what exactly is meant by maturity of expression; the question of what exactly is the nature of poetic idea and the question of poetic borrowing which in its baser form becomes plagiarism.

Rājaśekhara describes him as belonging to a distinguished Brāhmaṇa family and his wife Avantisundarī as a jewel of the Chauhan family which

1. *Vikāṣanītambar*, p. 4.

2. *Ibid*, p. 5.

means that she was princess. What exactly the romantic circumstances were which led to their marriage is not revealed by any of the available references to her."

PLOT

Avantisundarī is busy going through a manuscript, Rājakavi Rājaśekhara enters and asks her which book she is poring over. Avantisundarī praises the book very much but does not disclose the name of the author. They both discuss about the book for quite some time. At last the secret is revealed to him that the book about which they are discussing is his own creation. Both are very happy over this. Rājaśekhara tells Avantisundarī that Karpūramañjarī is not sweet only to the ears but is also capable of pleasing the eyes. Rājaśekhara himself makes arrangements for the staging of the play which is to be shown in the auditorium of the royal palace. Both Rājaśekhara and Avantisundarī talk about the play and then themselves go to see the play.

CHARACTERIZATION

Avantisundarī—the wife of Rājaśekhara, is herself a great critic. Her husband appreciates this quality of hers when he finds her poring over a book. He naturally becomes curious to know its name. He is sure of this that no ordinary work can absorb her thoughts so much.

राजशेखरः—अयि चाहमानकुलमौलिमालिके ! कोऽयं कोशविशेषो य एवमत्यन्तावधानेन त्वया संमान्यते ?¹

"Rājaśekhara—O you the crest-garland of the family of the Chāhamānas, what is this manuscript to which you are paying such deep and respectful attention ?"

She is all praise for Karpūramañjarī, her husband's work, and expresses her ideas in the following words :

अवन्तिसुन्दरी—तथा पठितमनुभूतञ्च । रसपरिमलमेदुरेयं कर्पूरमञ्जरी न केवलं कर्णवित्तं
सयोग्या अपि तु हृदयविधयापि सहृदयलोकमानन्दयिष्यति । तद्रङ्गे
प्रयोज्य एतस्या रसमनुबुभूषामि ।²

"Avantisundarī : at that time I read it and enjoyed it. This Karpūramañjarī, like the camphor blossom is full of the fragrance of *rasa*. Not only is it fit to be an ear-ornament but also will this give delight to the *Sahṛdayas*,

1 Avantisundarī p. 2

2 Ibid, p. 6.

the poetically susceptible people, by its sight (performance) too. So I want to enjoy it by having it staged."

Avantisundarī was a great literary figure of her time. She was rhetorician of no mean merit. Her husband was deeply impressed by her critical acumen. She is quoted as an authority on some of the literary problems in the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā. She can put forward her own theories, as for example, on *śabdapāka*, maturity of expression, she says :

रसोचितशब्दार्थसूक्तिनिबन्धनं पाकः ।¹

On *vastusvabhāva*, the nature of poetic idea, she says :

विदग्धभणितिभङ्गिनिवेद्यं वस्तुनो रूपं न नियतस्वभावम् ।²

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Dr. Raghavan is quite expert in giving us short plays on the model of the Western operas. It was given to him only to create plays from the minimum of the matter with him—a few verses of the poetesses found in the anthologies. This was the skeleton. The expert hand of Dr. Raghavan gave flesh and body to it. These verses in these plays were judiciously arranged by the author in a way as to come to acquire a sort of sequence and were made to fit in with the prose based on them. The whole effort was very natural—no appearance of a contrived effort to create a story where none existed previously. It goes to the credit of the author that the verses of the poetesses seem to flow out of the prose of the author and not vice versa. To impart naturalness to a contrived thing is the greatest success of any creative artist. Dr. Raghavan can claim this success in an abundant measure.

Dr. Raghavan has a pleasant style. His language is full of alliteration as may be seen from the following examples :

कविकुलराज्ञी राज्ञी,³ वर्णचातुरी वर्णनाचातुरी च,⁴ प्रत्नं पद्यरत्नम्⁵ तदपदाननिदान-
भूतम्,⁶ मतिक्रतकेन ।⁷

In metaphor too he shows his excellence. The metaphor of the *mauktikas* (pearls) on the *muktakas* (free style verses) is very favourite

1. Ibid p. 9.

2. Ibid, p. 10.

3. *Vijayāka* p. 2.

4. Ibid, p. 5.

5. Ibid, p. 5.

6. Ibid, p. 7.

7. *Avantisundarī*, p. 8.

with him and is very charming too on account of its alliterative effect, which probably is responsible for his resorting to it more than once. The mention at one place of *pratibhāsukti* as the *muktakamauktika* is very happy :

अश्रुतपूर्वं मुवतकमौवितकं किञ्चित् भवदीयप्रतिभाशुक्तिसम्पुटप्रादुर्भूतम् ।¹

The metaphor is complete here. Elsewhere the author gives us a metaphor of a mighty river for Pāṇinīśāstra while speaking of such grammars as Kātantra as merely canals :

अस्माभिस्तु पाणिनिमहानदीप्लवनकुतुकिनीभिः कातन्त्रादिकुल्यानां वार्ते न श्रुता ।²

At another place he speaks of intellect as the *kataka* with which the impurity of thoughts is to be recovered :

तव मतिक्रतकेन विचारकालुष्यं शोधयितुमिच्छामि ।³

The author, a great ālaṅkārika, is quite expert in the use of the similes too as may be seen from the following examples :

(क) प्रीणयतितराम् औचित्यमिव भवत्या गुणगणेषु जीवितभूतोऽयं विनयः ।⁴

(ख) असुलभो हि तावान् गुणशाली भर्ता यमासाद्य भवादृशी काचित् लब्धहेमपरभागमिव रत्नमधिगमिष्यतितरां शोभाम् ।⁵

(ग) तेन उद्घाटितात् पद्यात् कोशादिव अर्थरत्नानि निष्पतन्ति ।⁶

A few good sentences pregnant with deep meaning too greet the eye of the reader as it wanders from page to page :

(क) प्रायः पुलकालङ्कारो वचःपल्लवं निरर्थयति खलु ।⁷

(ख) नूनं वितनोव्यापार इवायं व्यापारः प्रतीतिर्नाम, यस्य शारीरिकस्य शब्दार्थमात्रे शरीरं नोपलभ्यते ।⁸

1 Vijayāṅkṣ, p.6. Vikāṇitambā, p. 3.

2. Vikāṇitambā, p. 7.

3. Avantisundarī, p.8.

4. Vijayāṅkṣ, p. 6

5. Vikāṇitambā, p. 5

6 Vijayāṅkṣ, p 7.

7 Ibid, p 6

8 Ibid, p. 7

Kālidāsacaritam

INTRODUCTORY

The play 'Kālidāsacaritam' is the work of Mr. S. B. Velankar. It is published from Bombay in 1961. The play consists of five acts and has in it some hundred printed pages. The title of the play would make it look a historical work. The author is anxious to set all misconceptions about it at rest. Says he :

नेदमैतिहासिकं नाटकम् । महाकविकालिदासस्य वाङ्मयस्यालोडनेन तस्य जीवितविषये यन्मम मानसेन कल्पितं तन्नाट्यरूपेणात्र निधीयते । यदीदं रसिकाभिमतं तन्मे श्रमः सफलीभूत इति मन्ये ।¹

"The play is not a historical one. What image my mind could draw by wading through the works of Kālidāsa, is being put here in the form of a play. If the connoisseurs can persuade themselves to like it, I will consider my labours amply repaid."

In the beginning of the play, the author has given a preface covering four pages in which he has thrown light on some of the important facts in the play.

While writing this play, the playwright has kept in view the sequence in which Kālidāsa composed his works. The play begins with the completion of the Rtusambhāra and ends with the beginning of the great poem Raghuvamśa. The time of his (Kālidāsa's) embassy to Vidarbha coincides with the creation by him of the Meghadūta, The Mālavikāgnimitra, too can be assigned to that very period.

Except Kālidāsa and Vikramāditya, all other characters are imaginary. Even Paṇḍitarāja who is shown in the play as connected with all plots to bring down Kālidāsa, is the playwright's own creation. He cannot evidently be famous Paṇḍitarāja Jagannātha, for, he was a much later poet belonging by consensus of opinion to a period not earlier than the 17th century A.D. He is definitely not the contemporary of Kālidāsa.

Kālidāsa is shown in the play to lead an embassy to the court of

1 Prayojanam.

Vidarbha. From there he sends a message through a cloud to his wife, Alakā who is the personification of the city of that name. It is found mentioned in the Meghadūta. The urge to send a message to the separated beloved came naturally to Kālidāsa and it is this urge which found its fulfilment in the immortal lyric poem, the Meghadūta.

PLOT

First act—The play opens with the preparations for the spring festival. Queen Vasudhā is shown waiting anxiously for king Vikramāditya. Time passes by but the king does not turn up. The Queen is naturally worried at this. Then appears Paṇḍitarāja with the information that Kālidāsa has insulted him in the royal court that day. The Queen is very angry at this and thinks of the means to send Kālidāsa out of the capital (Ujjayinī). In the mean-time, king Vikramāditya comes. He is full of praise for Kālidāsa's proficiency in *samasyā-pūrti* and remarks that he, (Kālidāsa), is certainly more learned than Paṇḍitarāja. These words of the king naturally do not appeal to the Queen, for, she, in her heart of hearts, wants to get rid of Kālidāsa. Just at that very moment, Kālidāsa comes there and joins the king, the Queen and the Paṇḍitarāja. He comes with the information of Vidarbha's plot. The king likes to discuss the whole thing with his Chief Minister and his Commander-in-Chief, before making up his mind on any course of action. In the mean-time, he orders a competition between Kālidāsa and Paṇḍitarāja for extemporaneous composition of verses. He asks the Queen to be the judge and to find out for herself as to who of the two is superior to the other. The competition begins with Queen Vasudhā as the judge. Both rivals compose verses and do the *samasyā-pūrti* and the like. Now here, too, Kālidāsa's verses prove far superior in merit to those of the Paṇḍitarāja. Queen Vasudhā herself has to concede this, but she cannot reconcile herself to the popularity of Kālidāsa. The seeds of jealousy sown by Paṇḍitarāja seem to have taken deep roots in her mind.

Vikramāditya comes to know from the Chief Minister that the king of Vidarbha, in collusion with the king of Kosala, is plotting to overthrow the king of Mālava. In the light of this, it is decided to send somebody to Vidarbha to lead an embassy to its court. Queen Vasudhā now finds the right moment to get rid of Kālidāsa. She advises the king to send Kālidāsa to the court of Vidarbha as ambassador. She also, at the same time, devises such measures as may make it impossible for Kālidāsa to come back to Mālava. Kālidāsa very gladly accepts the royal assignment and in high spirits, leaves for his home. Paṇḍitarāja, on the other hand, prepares a scheme for the removal from the

residence of Kālidāsa of all his works through one of his accomplices. Vasudhā sends that very accomplice to Vidarbha to keep a close watch on Kālidāsa's movements. During his visit to Vidarbha, Kālidāsa is accompanied by his brother, Raghunātha too.

Second act—Sukīrti, the ruler of Vidarbha, is highly worried on account of Kālidāsa's diplomatic mission. He tries to find out from him some important secrets of Mālava, but fails. He is highly disappointed at this. He, however, comes to know that Kālidāsa is well aware of his (Sukīrti's) collusion with the ruler of Kosala and their joint plot to launch an attack on Mālava. Sukīrti is afraid of this information passing to Vikramāditya. So to prevent Kālidāsa from going back to Ujjayinī and submitting a report to his king about his (Sukīrti's) plot he (Sukīrti) arrests him and puts him in prison. Still undeterred at his efforts in getting hold of some secrets of Mālava, Sukīrti appoints a girl named Sarasvatī, a charming singer and dancer, to keep company with Kālidāsa. To facilitate her work, he hands her over a ring with a royal insignia.

Now the story takes a different turn. Sarasvatī, while on her way to Kālidāsa's apartment in the prison, is molested by Govinda and Gopāla, the two spies who have been assigned by Paṇḍitarāja and Vasudhā the duty of keeping a watch on Kālidāsa's movements in Vidarbha. They express their desire to Sarasvatī to marry her. Sarasvatī's honour is at stake. In these moments of distress, she prays to Raghunātha (Rāma) to save her. Now we have a dramatic irony. The name of Kālidāsa's brother, too, is Raghunātha who happens to pass that way. He thinks that a woman in distress is calling out to him for help. He appears on the scene and rescues Sarasvatī who is naturally highly grateful to him. When she comes to Kālidāsa, she tells him that she is his friend and that she would prove helpful to him in every possible way. Just as she is saying this, Raghunātha comes. Kālidāsa introduces Sarasvatī to him, little knowing that they have met each other earlier, too, by a strange turn of events. Sarasvatī very well recalls the words of praise for her husband's younger brother that Alakā (Kālidāsa's wife), her one time friend, had uttered once. She was already feeling attracted towards Raghunātha. Now, having had an opportunity to see him, she falls in love with him. She also frees Kālidāsa from captivity by some device. Kālidāsa continues to live in Vidarbha disguised as Raghunātha. Sarasvatī and Raghunātha, too, live together and marry each other by Gandharva rites.

Third act—King Vikramāditya does not receive any news from Kālidāsa while from some other sources, he comes to know that he (Kālidāsa) has been

arrested and imprisoned by Sukīrti. He naturally feels inclined to launch an attack on Vidardha to punish its ruler for having broken the age-old convention of diplomatic immunity but the very idea of the killing and destruction which a war entails, puts a brake on his desire to wage a war. This is one side of the picture.

The other side is furnished by the arrangements that Paṇḍitarāja makes for the theft of Kālidāsa's works in his (Kālidāsa's) long absence from Ujjayinī. At Paṇḍitarāja's instance, one Govindabhaṭṭa goes to Kālidāsa's house to remove from there by theft all his works. Now it so happens that Kālidāsa, who has slipped out of Vidarbha prison and has come back to his house in Ujjayinī the same day quietly notices the thief in his house and catches hold of him. At this, Alakā, the wife of Kālidāsa, gets up from her bed and thinking Govindabhaṭṭa to be a fool who has entered the house through mistake, requests Kālidāsa (who is disguised as a policeman) to release him. It is only after some time that Kālidāsa discloses his identity to Alakā. This rather unexpected union of the separated husband and wife provides intense happiness to both of them.

Fourth Act—Back in Ujjayinī, Kālidāsa tells everything to Vikramāditya who becomes all the more favourably inclined towards him and sends him to the Kuntala country as the head of a diplomatic mission. Kālidāsa's absence from Ujjayinī once again provides Paṇḍitarāja an opportunity to hatch a plot against him. He proclaims him (Kālidāsa) a spy of Vidarbha. Paṇḍitarāja goes to Vikramāditya with this allegation against Kālidāsa. As a proof for this, he points to Sarasvatī, a girl from the Vidarbha country, who is living in Kālidāsa's house. Vikramāditya tells Paṇḍitarāja that if what he had said is proved correct, then Kālidāsa would surely be punished. But if, on the other hand, Paṇḍitarāja's allegation proves false and fabricated, he (Paṇḍitarāja) will have to suffer the punishment which Kālidāsa may fix for him. Paṇḍitarāja agrees to this. Sarasvatī is called to the royal court. She reveals there the secret of her marriage with Raghunātha, Kālidāsa's younger brother, and gives satisfactory answers to the questions put to her. Paṇḍitarāja's allegations are, thus, proved untrue and he is ordered to clear out of Ujjayinī immediately.

Fifth Act—King Vikramāditya honours Kālidāsa for all the varied services rendered by him to the State and for all his poetic work composed up to that time, which, of course, does not include the Raghuvamśa. He (the king) puts him at the head of all the nine jewels in his learned assembly.

Vikramāditya holds the view that a poet is far superior in importance to a soldier for, he saves everybody and immortalizes the bravery of the kings by his poetry. The Army Chief, however, disagrees with him. Says he, "The soldier's contribution to the safety of his country is the same as a poet's for the prestige of the country." He (Army Chief) does not like the honour done to Kālidāsa. This naturally hurts Kālidāsa. He is further pained at the stipulation by queen Vasudhā conveyed through Sarasvatī that in the next plays to be written by Kālidāsa on the life of Vikramāditya, he (Vikramāditya) should be described as having one wife only. Thus does Kālidāsa give expression to his injured feelings : "Who are these people to order a poet while they themselves are incapable of restraining the king from having more than one wife ?" He asks Sarasvatī to carry the letter of resignation from the post of the Chief of Poets, on which he was appointed only a little while ago. Sarasvatī agrees to do so and leaves to meet the king. Just as that very time, the Chief Minister enters Kālidāsa's house and informs him that he (Chief Minister) has been sent by the king to secure his resignation. On an enquiry from Alakā, he tells her that after Kālidāsa had been honoured the Army Chief went to the royal palace and requested the king to relieve him of his present post on the ground that if he likes Kālidāsa, the envoy, then what has he to do with the rather redundant office of the Army Chief. The king tried to pacify him and bring him round and put in efforts to persuade him to change his decision. But he was adamant and would not listen. So finding no way out, the king orders Kālidāsa to tender his resignation from the External Affairs Ministry post. The Chief Minister carries with him the draft of the resignation letter. He gives it to Kālidāsa for his signatures. Kālidāsa feels highly relieved at this and tells his wife that he is no longer a subservient royal employee. He can now breathe freely and will henceforth devote himself entirely to writing poetry. He expresses the wish to take up for the theme of his poem the history of the whole race of Śrī Rāmacandra. And that will win him fame and honour, not honour from the king, but the honour from the general people, young and old, learned and unlearned, till the sun and moon last. He then prays to lord Śiva. Then enters the king, the queen (Vasudhā) and the Army Chief. They are about to enquire from Alakā as to why Kālidāsa has resigned from the post of the Chief of the nine Jewels also. Alakā intercepts them and says that the mortals should cause no obstruction to the production of ambrosia on this auspicious moment. Kālidāsa is free

from all restrictions. He now comes up with the first verse of the Raghu-vaṃśa. Then flow forth other verses. A shower of clouds falls from heaven. And then with the Bharatavākya, the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Kālidāsa—As it appears from the very title, the hero of the play is the poet Kālidāsa who is well known the world over. The imagination of the poet is seen to be at its best in the depiction of the specialities of his character and the events of his life which have been delineated with a particular viewpoint. But this much must be said here that the poet has not allowed his imagination to weave the story far removed from the facts of Kālidāsa's life, as they are known to us. We may, in support of this, reproduce here a verse from the prologue to the play :

काव्यान्तर्गतकालिदासमननान्मन्मानसोत्प्रेक्षितं
स्तोकं जीवनचित्रमत्र लिखितं तद्वन्दनाहेतुना ।
स्यादेतत् किल कालिदासचरितं तोषाय तेषामिति
श्रीरामः कुरुते गुणज्ञविदुषां पादेषु विज्ञापनाम् ॥

"To pay my obeisance, I have given here a brief life-sketch of Kālidāsa based on imagination after I had ruminated over Kālidāsa as he is represented in poems. Śrīrāma is making this request at the feet of scholars who are in a position to recognize merit, that this Kālidāsacarita may provide them with satisfaction."

The theme of the play is the imaginary delineation of the character of Kālidāsa as the playwright could think it to have been, after the study of the older works.

Occasionally, however, the poet avoids the popular legends, as for example, the playwright mentions the name of Kālidāsa's wife as Alakā while in popular legend, her name is found to be Vidyottamā. Even the origin of the Meghadūta is described differently by our playwright.

Kālidāsa is suffering incarceration at Vidarbha. From there, he sends a message to his wife, Alakā, in Ujjayinī through a cloud.

From the study of the play, it appears that the main purpose of the poet in writing it was to show that Kālidāsa was as successful an ambassador as he was a poet. That is why the story has it that Kālidāsa was successful in stopping the hostilities between Vidarbha and Kuntala. His diplomacy was successful in putting the two countries on the firm footing of friendship and cordiality. Queen Vasudhā takes him a diplomat only.

She cannot persuade herself to believe that Kālidāsa can ever be gifted with poetic qualities. That is why she asks Paṇḍitarāja to remain free from all anxiety and worry :

वसुधा—तदेतमुज्जयिनीजनुषं कालिदासं पराजित्य दासं करिष्यामः । न भेतव्यं भवता ।
परराष्ट्रकार्यालयसेवकोऽयं कथं कविर्भवति ।¹

“Vasudhā—Don't you be afraid. We may put in captivity this Ujjayinī-born Kālidāsa. How can he be a poet working as he does in the Ministry of External Affairs ?”

The rise of Kālidāsa prompts his opponents and even queen Vasudhā to continue plottings against him from beginning to end. But all their evil designs were frustrated and attempts at harming him foiled. The lines quoted above suffice to provide the idea of the nature of the plot hatched.

Kālidāsa was a simple and straight-forward person but, at the same time, he possessed the rare qualities of adroitness and courage and was highly devoted and loyal to his master. That is why he says :

कथं दोषः स्पृशेदत्र विष्णोरंशं महीपतिम् ।
न स्पृशेद् रजनीध्वान्तं नभो घाम प्रभावताम् ॥²

“How can a king, a part of Viṣṇu, commit a wrong ? Can the darkness of the night envelop (touch) the light of the luminaries in the sky ?”

Kālidāsa is deeply attached to his wife but places his loyalty to the country above it. Alakā is eager to accompany Kālidāsa who is bound for Vidarbha but Kālidāsa refuses to take her along with him. This makes Alakā unhappy. Kālidāsa notices her sadness and tries to console her in the following words :

“न मन्तव्यं त्वद्वियोगान्मे जीवनं सुखकरमिति । किन्तु देशकार्ये व्यक्तिसौख्यमाहवनीयम् ।”
दुःखितवृता विभवयुता प्रियसखि निजभूमाता ॥
समयोऽयं वरतनयाब् जननीसेवां नेता
प्रेमपाशनाशैरपि समरं वीरो याता
सखि सदने वासमितो न च सहते रिपुजेता ।³

“Don't you think that in your separation I can have an easy life. But

1. First act, p 5.
2. First act, p.9
3. First act, p. 25.

one has to sacrifice personal comfort for the cause of the nation." He further says :

"Dear friend ! our prosperous land is surrounded all over by misfortunes. The time will lead the good sons to the service of the Mother. The brave will go to the battlefield cutting through the noose of love. The conqueror of the enemies will not tolerate living in the house of his spouse from now on."

In the above words has been described Kālidāsa's love for his wife, his country and poetry which increases in intensity from one to the other. That he loves his wife is beyond question but when the question of his loyalty to the country comes he does not hesitate even for a minute to sacrifice his love for his wife. But above all he loves poetry most. It has become such an inalienable part of his life that he can never think of separation from it. That is why when he is ordered to compose poems under certain restrictions, he cares little for the office he has held. He renounces his titles, gives up the office and devotes himself entirely to writing poems. He composes the Raghuvamśa, the best among his poems, when he is free from all restrictions and liabilities. This fact is noted by the playwright at the end of the play.

We come to know of Kālidāsa's political sagacity, his ability in diplomatic manoeuvres and his supreme quality of fearlessness when he gives an effective reply to king Sukīrti, the ruler of Vidarbha, who had threatened him with capital punishment on account of his having carried on spying activities in his kingdom. Kālidāsa's words uttered at this most fateful moment of his life, breathe the spirit of a free citizen and show his indomitable courage. Says he :

कालिदासः — काममेव शासनं वितरतु विदर्भाधिपः । न तेन मे भीतिः कार्यनाशो वा ।
मालवशत्रुत्वमेव भवतैतावता तु लब्धं स्यात् । राजदूतवधेन राजमण्डले
घृणा च । प्रभवति खलु भवान्मम जीवितस्येदानीम् ।

तथापि—

यत्कर्तव्यं तद्विमृश्यैव कार्यं
नाशो नित्यो वैपरीत्येन वृत्तौ ।
नेदं श्लाघ्यं यदि भूपाविवेकै—
दुःखाद्येयः सर्वलोको ह्यनागाः ॥¹

1. Second act, p 31

"Kālidāsa—Whatever orders the ruler of Vidarbha may pass, I am not frightened at them. They will not be able to hinder or disrupt my work. By that you would only gain the hostility of the Mālava country. The kings would hate you for murdering an envoy. Now my life is in your hands. Still I ask you to do whatever you may desire but think before doing it. It is not good that innocent people may have to undergo sufferings due to the indiscriminate and thoughtless activities of their ruler."

After his return from Kuntala, Kālidāsa is honoured by his king. Even at that time, we find him steadfast in his loyalty to his country. Says he :

लाभाशया न रचितो मम वाग्विलासो
जानाति भूपतिरिदं स्वयमेव सत्यम् ।
त्यागे तनुर्न गणिता मम राष्ट्रकार्ये
जीवन् स्थितोऽत्र खलु नैष ममापराधः ।¹

"Not out of any desire for (material) gain did I use those words. That this is true, the king knows very well. While working for the nation, I did not care for anybody. That I am still living is no fault of mine."

Kālidāsa is eminently successful so far as the question of doing one's duties is concerned. But he is fully alive to the tender side of life, too. That is why, he could compose the Meghadūta even when he was living in a dark cell while his heart was touched and pained due to the separation from his beloved. When the poet feels that living far away, as he does, he is not in a position to send a word of comfort to his wife through any other means, he sends it through a cloud. The poet, in the playwright, is seen to be at his best here. The emotional upsurge in the heart of the incarcerated poet is described in words which cannot be improved upon. Thus cries out the unhappy poet :

एक एष मेघस्त्वरया पश्चिमां दिशमुपगच्छति । रे पयोधर, सागरमग्नं दिवसनाथमुद्धतुं नु
प्रतीचीमुपयासि । रे वारिवाह, अथवा विरहशोकातां प्रतीचीमाश्वासयितुं न जवेन परिक्रमसे ।
तर्हि शुभास्ते पन्थानः सन्तु । सर्वमनुकूलमेव ते ।

मन्दं मन्दं वहति पवनः श्रान्तपीडापनोदी
वृक्षे वृक्षे कुसुमनिचयैर्गन्धितः स्पर्शशीतः ।
एको मेघ प्रचलसि नभःसागरे नीरिव त्वं
दुःखातीनां विषदपनये सज्जनानां प्रयत्नः ॥

1 Fifth act, p 86

एवं सति रे अम्भोद, कथं मां विपन्नं न पश्यसि ।

सन्तप्तानां त्वमसि शरणं तत्पयोद प्रियायाः

सन्देशं मे हर नरपतिस्नेहविश्लेषितस्य ।

आश्वास्या सा युवतिरलका कालिदासस्य पत्नी

श्रान्ता दीना विरहविकलां जीवितेश्चैकचित्ता ॥

(नेपथ्ये मेघनादः) किं गर्जसि । कथमेतत् त्वया कार्यमिति ? भो विद्युत्पते, भवान् सर्वलोकस्य जीवनं विभर्ति तत्कथं मे सन्देशं नीत्वा, न तव भ्रातृजायाजीवनं कुसुमपेलवमाशाबन्धेन दृढीकरोषि ।¹

There is only one cloud which is proceeding towards the West :

"O ye ! the cloud ! why don't thou move towards the western quarter to rescue the Sun which has sunken in the ocean, or O cloud, is it that thou art speeding to console the western quarter which is feeling the pangs of thy separation. If so, auspicious be thy path. Thou hast everything available to thee.

The breeze is blowing gently, removing the pain of the fatigued. Its touch is cool while it is being made fragrant by clusters of flowers growing on every tree. O cloud, thou art the only one who are moving like a ship in the ocean of the sky. It is the endeavour of the good to remove hardships of the afflicted.

This being so, O cloud ! why don't you pay any attention to me while I am in trouble. You are the refuge of those afflicted. You carry the message of a man while I have been separated (from my beloved), on account of the love of the king. It is for you to console Alakā, who is miserably tired and restless due to separation. The only thought that accompanies her mind is that of his lord (Kālidāsa) :

(Behind the curtain there is heard the thunder of the cloud).

Why this thunder ? Do you know ? Is it that you think as to how you can do this ? O you, the lord of lightning, you sustain the entire world. Then how is it that you do not make the heart of your brother's wife, which is tender as the flowers, strong by carrying my message (to her) ?"

Kālidāsa has full faith in the fidelity of his wife. That is why when they meet each other, Kālidāsa permits himself the following remarks :

मम विमला ननु बाला

पतिहितनिरता करुणकोमला

1. Second act p. 39

सौख्ये हि सखी मौक्तिकमाला
विरहे तमसा नलिनी विकला

प्रीतिसङ्गमे तरङ्गततरला ॥¹

"My young wife is, indeed, free from any blot. She is given to the welfare of her husband. She is tender-hearted and soft. In happiness, my friend is like a pearl necklace, in separation, she is like a she-lotus, listless due to slackness, at the time of union in love, she is like waves."

Finally one of the most brilliant facets of Kālidāsa's character is his renunciation of all his titles and honours and his giving up of all offices of State to devote himself entirely to writing poetry. Kālidāsa was destined to be a great poet. It was, therefore, an imperative necessity for him to keep away from the busy affairs of the State and devote himself entirely to his literary pursuits. It was when he could breathe freely that he could create a poem like *Raghuvamśa* which is ranked as one of the very best in the Sanskrit literature. Kālidāsa was, no doubt, honoured highly by his king but the honour that he could receive as a poet proved too great an attraction for him to induce him to sever all his connections with the State. We may well reproduce an excerpt from one of his statements which suffices adequately to give us an insight into the working of his mind :

का कथा संमानस्य नृपविहितस्य । स एव संमानो यः शब्दार्थयुगलस्य सामर्थ्यप्रतीतेर्विस्म-
तैर्विद्वद्विद्वद्भिराबालवृद्धैः काव्यस्य पुनः पुनः पठनेन यावच्चन्द्रदिवाकरो क्रियते । एकशरीरेऽर्धनारी-
नटराजेन संयुतं द्विधा रूपं यथाऽवभासते तथैव मे शब्दार्थयुगलमविरतं वितन्येत ।²

"What can be said about the honour by the king ? That is the real honour which the people, young and old, learned and unlearned, do by going through a poem over and over again while they are wonder-struck at the realization of words and meanings."

Alakā—*Alakā* is the heroine of the play not because she has any special role to play but because she is the devoted wife of the hero, Kālidāsa. In the present work, her role is not very conspicuous indeed. She is a faithful, loving and devoted wife. She also keenly looks after her husband. She would very much like to accompany him while he (Kālidāsa) is preparing to leave for a distant place. She, however, suppresses this natural desire of hers and agrees to stay on when her husband, Kālidāsa, tells her that at the moment, he must

1. Third act, p 64.

2. Fifth act, p 98.

give top priority to the welfare of his country and must regard every other consideration secondary. She spends the days of separation in deep agony and anguish. Her mind is always occupied with the thoughts of her husband who is far away. Her devotion to him is seen at its best when she, unlike other ordinary women, does not feel the pinch when he (Kālidāsa) renounces all his titles and honour. She shows her wide understanding and sensitive appreciation of the feelings of her husband who, she knows, is destined to create a poetry of lasting value and abiding interest. She is so much charmed with the noble thoughts of her husband that she herself takes the lead in requesting king and the queen etc., not to force Kālidāsa to change his decision. She can just guess the purpose which has brought the dignitaries to her house, and before they say anything, she announces Kālidāsa's decision like a true *sahadharmini*. She feels very happy that her husband would create immortal poetry. Her words to Sarasvatī breathe the spirit of intense happiness and deep spiritual satisfaction at the thought of her husband's great moment :

नैवं सरस्वति ! पवनेन प्रज्वलनमेव पावकप्रकृतिः । कस्तामन्यथा कर्तुं प्रभवति । सरस्वति,
नरजीवने क्वचिदेकः क्षण उदेति यदा परं तप्तो जनो निजस्वभावमप्यतिरुहोज्ज्वलां प्रभां
निर्मिमीते जीवितकार्यं च सफलीकरोति । मन्ये स एव मङ्गलमुहूर्तः समुत्थित आर्यजीवने ।¹

"O Sarasvatī ! This is not like this. To spread with the wind is the very nature of fire. Who can prevent it from doing so ? O Sarasvatī ! there comes a moment in the life of a man when he, having been burnt hard, rises above his nature and creating the brilliant glory, fulfils the mission of his life. I feel the same auspicious moment has come in the life of my husband."

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The playwright has employed all the popular metres, the more prominent among them being Indravajrā, Upendravajrā, Upajāti, Drutavilambita, Pṛthvī, Bhujāṅgaprayāta, Mandākrāntā, Mālinī, Rathoddhatā, Vaitāliya, Vasanta-tilaka, Vaṃśastha, Śālinī, Śārdūlavikrīḍita, Śikhariṇī, Svāgatā, Hariṇī and so on. Some of the rather unfamiliar metres like Vidhyaṅgamālā have also been used. Apart from this, the Prakrit metres like Dindī and Sākī, too have been used. The style in which the songs are sung, is traditional except in certain cases where the author experiments with new styles of singing and marking time.

The drama, as has been said above, is divided into five acts which are each sub-divided into three scenes. It is only in the fifth act that we meet

1. Fifth act, p 96.

with the *pravesaka* in addition to the three scenes. The contemporary political activities have been conjecturally described in the play. How the kings could find out each other's secret and went to wars; their diplomatic manoeuvres and attempts at subversion have all been dealt with in the present play. True to the age-old rules of dramaturgy, the author has not depicted any scene of actual warfare or bloody conflict on the stage.

The present work is the author's second, the first one being the *Saṅgīta-saubhadram*, a Sanskrit rendering of a Marathi play of the same name. The peculiarity of both of these plays lies in the absence of Prakrits and an English introduction. The author justifies the departures from the established practice on the ground that these would introduce an element of novelty into the works which would make them more interesting and useful for the present-day audiences and readers. The modern plays should not, says he, be the copies of their old counterparts in style and technique. The English introduction, too, is justified on the same ground, the intelligentsia being more familiar with English would find it easy to know the theme and to appreciate the other important features of the drama.

Because the play has Kālidāsa as the hero, so it was natural for the poet to adopt verbatim some of the verses or parts thereof from the works of the great poet as may be seen from the following examples :

- (क) मत्तद्विरेफपरिचुम्बितचारुपुष्पा मन्दानिलाकुलितनम्रमृदुप्रवालाः ।
कुर्वन्ति कामिमनसां सहसोत्सुकत्वं बालातिमुक्तलतिकाः समवेक्ष्यमाणाः ॥¹
- (ख) वापीजलानां मणिमेखलानां शशांकभासां प्रमदाजनानाम् ।
चूतद्रुमाणां कुसुमानतानां ददाति सौभाग्यमयं वसन्तः ॥²
- (ग) मन्दं मन्दं वहति पवनः श्रान्तपीडापनोदः ।³
- (घ) सन्तप्तानां त्वमसि शरणं तत्पयोद प्रियायाः
सन्देशं मे हर नरपतिस्नेहविश्लेषितस्य ।
आस्वास्या सा युवतिरलका कालिदासस्य पत्नी
श्रान्ता दीना विरहविकला जीवितेशैकचित्ता ॥⁴
- (ङ) जातं वंशे भुवनविदिते पुष्करावर्तकानां
जानामि त्वां प्रकृतिपुरुषं कामरूपं मघोनः ।

1. First act, verse 6 p. 4 (*Rtusamhāra*, 6. 17)

2. First act, verse 7, p. 4 (*Rtusamhāra*, 6. 3)

3. Second act, verse 15, p. 39 (*Meghadūta*, 1. 10)

4. Second verse 16, p. 39 (*Meghadūta*, 1. 7)

तेनार्थित्वं त्वयि विधिवशाद् दूरवन्धुर्गतोऽहं
याच्ञा मोघा वरमधिगुणे नाधमे लब्धकामा ॥¹

- (च) नद्या इव प्रवाहो विषमशिलासङ्कटस्खलितवेगः ।
विघ्नितसमागममुखो मनसिशयः शतगुणो भवति ॥²
- (छ) वागर्थविषयं संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥³

The style of the playwright is easy, fluent and idiomatic. At some places, the idioms and proverbs have an old ring about them while at other places, they look strikingly modern in thought and content. A few examples of each one of these two varieties would bear us out :

१. सुप्तो हि बोधनक्षमः । प्रबुद्धं तु को नाम बोधयिष्यति ।⁴
२. न हि चतुःशालस्थिता संमार्जनी देवगृहे स्थापनीया ।⁵
३. कंटकास्तृतमेव राजसिंहासनम् ।⁶
४. न युद्धं लोककल्याणकरम् ।⁷
५. सेवापि भाग्यनिहिता ननु साऽत्र धन्या ।⁸
६. न कदांगना सहते सपत्नीम् ।⁹
७. गौरवं पीडयान्वितम् । पीडा तु नश्यति गौरवं च चिरं तिष्ठति ।¹⁰
८. क्रियापदं सदा वाक्ये कर्तुं रन्यं न वान्वियात् ।¹¹
९. न रुचिरं किञ्चिच्चिराय विचरति ।¹²
१०. क्षणिकः पराक्रमः । तत्काव्यगानं तु चिरंतनम् ।¹³

Occasionally, we meet with, in the play, some *subhāṣitas*, too, which contain happy ideas couched in an equally happy style. As an example we quote the verse below :

1. Second act, verse 17 , p. 39 Meghadūta, 1. 6)
2. Fourth act, verse 11, p. 72 (Vikramorvaśīya, 3 8.)
3. Fifth act verse 35, p. 99 (Raghuvamśa, 1 1)
4. p. 3.
5. p. 3
6. p. 9.
7. p. 14.
8. p. 16
9. p. 16.
10. p. 66.
11. p. 75.
12. p. 79.
13. p. 88.

रजःकणैः किं चरणावलिप्तैः साधर्म्याप्यं किरणै रवेनु ।

स्पृशन्ति सूर्यस्य करा रजांसि समत्वभावाद् न समानधर्मात् ॥¹

The play has a good sprinkling of comic element, too. When Kālidāsa gets fame and Gopāla gets wife, Govinda says, "What have I got?" Then there begins a very pleasant conversation between Govinda and Gopāla² :

गोविन्दः—रे गोपाल ! कालिदासेन लब्धा कीर्तिः, भवता चार्जिता प्रीतिः, अस्माकं तु का गतिः ?

Govinda—"O Gopāla ! Kālidāsa has won fame and you have got love but what have I got ?"

गोपालः—मुक्तिः ।

Gopāla—"Salvation."

गोविन्दः—कथं जीवतो मे मुक्तिः ?

Govinda—"How salvation for me when I am still alive ?"

गोपालः—वयं बद्धा भवांस्तु मुक्त एव ।

Gopāla—"It is we who have been bound. You are indeed free."

गोविन्दः—कथं त्वं बद्धः ?

Govinda—"With what are you bound ?"

गोपालः—संसारपाशैः ।

Gopāla—"With the nooses of the world."

गोविन्दः—कया ?

Govinda—"By whom ?"

गोपालः—मदनिकया ।

Gopāla—"By Madanikā."

गोविन्दः—तर्हि बन्ध एव मे प्रियः

Govinda—"Then I like this bondage."

गोपालः—मैवम् । प्रियवयस्य बुद्धोऽहं प्रबुद्धोऽहं विप्रबुद्धोऽहमधुना । अपि तूदके गते सेतुबन्ध इव मेऽयं प्रबोधः । मा ते स्खलनं भवतु । मा स्त्रीपाशे बद्धो भूः ।

Gopāla—No, dear friend ! I have realized, I am awakened, I have clearly perceived. But this awakening of mine is like the building of a bridge while the water has run out. Don't stumble. Don't be bound with the noose of a woman."

गोविन्दः—स्वयं स्त्रीसुखमवाप्य कथं मां वंचयसि ?

1. Fifth act, p. 96.

2. Fifth act, pp. 89-90,

Govinda—"Why is it that having first enjoyed the feminine pleasure, you do not let myself have it?"

गोपालः—न हि रे अप्रबुद्ध । दूरत एव नारी प्रिया । तस्याः पाणिग्रहणेन स्वहस्तयोर्दलोह-
शृङ्खला बध्यते, न केवलं हस्तयोः पादयोश्चापि ।

Gopāla—"No, O fool; A woman appears charming from a distance only. With the holding of her hand one's own hands are tied in tight chains; not only hands but feet, too."

गोविन्दः—न जाने किं वदसि ? विशदं ब्रूहि ।

Govinda—"I cannot make out what you say. Be clear."

गोपालः—पश्य माम् । कमपि भेदं पश्यसि ?

Gopāla—"Look at me. Do you find any difference?"

गोविन्दः—तुन्दिलतनुर्जातोऽसि ।

Govinda—"Yes. You have become pot-bellied."

गोपालः—ननु कथमेवं जातः ? जानास्येतत् ? भोः संसारदुःखप्रस्तरा उदरे मे निविष्टाः ।

Gopāla—"How have I become so ? Do you have any idea ? The stones of the worldly unhappiness have entered into my belly."

गोविन्दः—असत्यमेतत् । न किञ्चित्प्रविशति दुःखं तवोदरे ।

Govinda—"This is not true. No unhappiness would enter into your belly."

गोपालः—अरे पश्य भोजनादिकम् । नाहं प्रभूतमत्र भक्षयामि । जानास्येवेदम् ।

Gopāla—"You see my food. I do not take much food. You know it already."

गोविन्दः—केवलमेकमहिषाहारस्त्वम् । नूनं न ततोऽधिकं भक्ष्यते त्वया ।

Govinda—"You take food which is sufficient for one he-buffalo. Indeed, you don't take more than that."

गोपालः—अधुना यदाहं वदामि, 'मदनिके पर्याप्तं मे भोजनं' तदा तदा सा 'नाथ स्वादु मोदकादि, अधिकतरं भक्षणीयं, जानामि ते भोजनप्रियताम्', इत्युक्त्वा पुनरपि मोदकादि प्रयच्छति ।¹

Gopāla—"Each time I say to Madanikā, 'this much food would suffice for me,' she would insist with the words, 'O lord; Modakas are delicious. Have them more. I know you like (rich) meals' and saying this, would give me more."

Similarly at other places, too, we meet with comic scenes which excite good laughter and provide a good relief against the intense political and

1. Fifth act, pp. 89-90.

diplomatic activities described in the play.

The author's language is characterized by a fair degree of alliteration. Apart from the songs where it is a must with the author it is found elsewhere too, e.g.

(क) कुतस्तस्य स्थानं प्रकटविकटे राज्यशकटे¹

(ख) न कालिदासप्रतिभाविलासो व्रजेद्विकासं भुवने विनैनाम्²

(ग) वन्यास्मि कन्या विदिशाजनन्या नान्यो.....³

There is however one verse where it is employed with the happiest of effects. The sequence in which the similar sound recurs has imparted to it a charm which is all its own. For proper appreciation we reproduce it below :

प्रत्युत्पन्नमतिः प्रजाहितकृतिविद्याकलानां पति-

विघ्नारुद्धगतिर्यशश्चिरततिर्नित्यं दयासंहतिः ।

काव्यापन्नरतिनिराहतधृतिश्चासावुदाराकृति-

स्तत्समानभृतिः, ममात्र विनतिः, स्यात्सर्वसत्समतिः ॥⁴

The language is generally free from any serious irregularity. Words like *krntana*⁵ etc., however, do jar on the ears.

The author shows his knowledge of the fundamental principles of the different śāstras in his work. Of Vedānta in :

(क) एकं सद्ब्रह्म सहते नान्यत्तत्त्वं जगद्भृतम् ।

राजान्तरं न सहते स्वोद्देशे भूपतिः क्वचित् ॥⁶

Of Nyāya in :

(ख) यथा शब्दः प्रमाणं स्यात् सद्विधिप्रतिषेधयोः ।

तथादेशश्च भवतो युक्तायुक्तविनिश्चये ॥⁷

Of Vyākaraṇa in :

(ग) भवतो वचनादेव निर्णयो नयमण्डले ।

क्रियापदं सदा वाक्ये कर्तुरन्यं न वान्वियात् ॥⁸

1 Fifth act, p. 82.

2. Second act, p. 40.

3. Second act, p. 42.

4. Fifth act, p. 85.

5. Fourth act, p. 75.

6. Fourth act, p. 74.

7. Fourth act, p. 74.

8. Fourth act, p. 75.

The scene of the competition between the Paṇḍitarāja and Kālidāsa is very well laid out in the play. Poetic bouts like the one described here were very common in ancient India and are still very popular. Besides catching the spirit of the scene and presenting it to us faithfully it helps to bring out the poet in the writer from whom we have some of his finest verses here. It is indeed gratifying to read in his work verses like,

स्मृतिनिमीलितलोचनयोषिता
न विदितं रमणागमनं ननु ।
सपदि तत्करपाशधृताऽऽवृता
कुमुदिनी शशिनैव विलोपिता ।¹

"A woman with her eyes closed while thinking of her loved one does not know his coming but just finds herself in his arms which cover her up. The waterlily was made to close by the moon itself."

Or

ज्योत्स्नां या मन्दहास्यैः शरदि समुचितां दर्शयन्ती वसन्ते
सौन्दर्येन्द्रीवरं या विकचयति तथा भास्वरं सर्वकालम् ।
घत्ते विद्युल्लताभां जलघररहितेऽप्यत्र या देवता तां
वन्द्योऽयं कालदासो व्यतिकृतसमयां वन्दते कालिदासः ॥²

"Fortunate is this Kālidāsa, the slave of Kāla (Mahākāla) who bows to this goddess who has caused confusion in time in so far as she by her smiles has shown the moonlight in spring though it is natural only in the autumn. She causes the shining blue lotus of her beauty bloom all the time. She gives the appearance of a streak of lightning even in this free-from-cloud season."

Before concluding the discussion it is pertinent to say a few words about the songs which abound in the play and lend a peculiar charm to it. They are found in the author's other work the Saṅgītasaubhadram too and a detailed notice has been taken of them in the appreciation of that play. But then there is a difference between the songs of that play and this. There they are the reproductions from the Marathi original. Anna Saheb Kirloskar had already given them in his play with all the indications of the *rāgas* and the *tālas* in which they are to be sung in his original Marathi version and the translator merely gave them the Sanskrit garb but in the present play (which is the original production of Velankar) they are the author's own

1. First act, p. 12.

2. First act, p. 13.

creation. They show the author's deep knowledge of the science of music as also his fascination for them. It is this fascination which is responsible for giving us the present musical comedy. Just as in the *Saṅgītasaubhadram* here too songs are prefaced with the names of the *rāgas* in which they are to be sung. The indication of the *tāla* too precedes the songs the number of which is pretty large in the play. There are atleast 32 songs some of which are to be sung in as difficult *rāgas* as *kedāra*, *śaṅkara*, *rāgeśrī*, *bāgeśrī*, *diṇḍī*, *khamāja*, *jogī*, *ārabi*, *pahādī*, *karnāṭakī*, *yamana*, *kāfī*, *jayajayavantī*, *bhūpa*, *garudadhvani*, *deśa*, *bhāiravī*, *bihāra*, *sohanī*, *tilakakāmoda*, *māṇḍa* and in such difficult *tālas* as *dhumālī*, *dādarā*, *jhapatāla*, *ekkā*, *keravā*, *dīpacandī*, apart from the usual *tritāla*. These songs have raciness all their own. Even the ears far less sensitive than that of the Indians can appreciate their beauty. For obvious limitations we cannot reproduce any sizable number of them here, however we may be tempted to do so. We will content ourselves with the reproduction here of only one or two which can serve just as samples :

(पहाड़ी, —दुमाली)

भूगतो ननु पूषा । दिविषदां भूषा ॥
 सुखकरदया निखिलजनानाम् । विहिता सुलभाऽशेषा ॥
 प्रजासु कुरुते प्रीतिं स यथा । न तथा नाथे योषा ॥
 श्रेष्ठगुणानां जगति विधात्रा । जनितां मञ्जूषा ॥¹

(मांडः, —त्रितालः)

प्रीतिरियं न च माया । मदीया । श्रेष्ठा त्वं किल जाया ॥
 वचने सखी ते ममाप्यभिमते नावसरः कटुतायाः ॥
 आस्ये दयिते स्याद् हास्यं ते लास्यैर्मे प्रतिभायाः ॥²

1. First act, p. 24.

2. Fifth act, p 95.

Historical Plays

Historical Plays

Vaṅgiyapratāpam

INTRODUCTORY

The play 'Vaṅgiyapratāpam' is written by Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgiśa. It has eight acts and 154 pages. It is published from Calcutta in 1352 Bengal era. The author aims at exploding the myth that the Bengalis are not the martial race. He is also imbued with the zeal of the glorification of Hinduism and presents it in the most favourable light in his play.

PLOT

First act—After the Nāndī the stage manager informs that one Shankar Chakravarti, a Bengali youth, who deeply loves his country has left for the forests. He is fed up with the tyranny of the Nawab of Bengal. While roaming about there he comes face to face with a lion. He prefers it to the Moghuls because it neither molests woman nor destroys temples. When the lion comes nearer, Shankar kills it with his revolver. Meanwhile a soldier accompanying Pratapaditya comes to him and asks him as to why he has killed the prey of Pratapaditya. He then takes him to Pratapaditya. Both develop a liking for each other and become friends. Pratapaditya is the son of Vikramaditya, the king of Jessore. Shankar informs Pratapaditya of the miserable condition of Bengal. Both pledge to free Bengal from the tyranny of the Nawab. Shankar is happy to find a companion who too is eager like him to free his country from the clutches of the Mohammedans.

Second act—Vikramaditya spends his time mostly in the devotion of the Lord. He is fed up with the bad habits of his cousin brother Vasantarai who wants to deprive his son Pratapaditya of the right to inherit the throne. Govinddas and Srinivas, the two Vaiṣṇava sadhus, sing a devotional song. This pleases Vikramaditya like anything. Just at that moment a bird pierced by an arrow and dripping blood falls before him. After an enquiry Vikramaditya comes to know that it is Vasantarai who has killed the bird. This hurts him. He is further pained when he is informed that the horoscope of Pratapaditya shows that he would one day rebel against his father. Bhavananda, the companion of Vasantarai (afterwards he becomes his minister), tells Vikramaditya that left to himself Pratapaditya is a good man but on account of keeping company

with such bad persons as Shankar Chakravarti he has taken to bad ways. At the first instance Vikramaditya resolves to leave Bengal and go to Banaras to devote himself entirely to the worship of the Lord. But after second thoughts he decides to send Pratapaditya to Delhi to gain wider experience of life. Bhavananda accompanies him there to keep a close watch on his movements.

Third act—Nilamadhava, a neighbour of Shankar Chakravarti, calls the fishermen who are singing a song and leisurely doing their work. He asks them that they should reach Prasadpur because the state officers there are tormenting the common people. He further says that Shankar Chakravarti also wants to send his wife Kalyani from Prasadpur to Yashor (Jessore). Nilamadhava tells Dharendra Datta, another neighbour of Shankar Chakravarti, that Shankar is going to be appointed as the minister of Pratapaditya. Meanwhile Surendra Nath Ghoshal, the chief of the Nawab's army, appears with some Moghul soldiers and is shown making efforts to capture Kalyani, and offering her to the Nawab as a gift. Suryakanta Guha, the army chief of Pratapaditya, is also present there. He is worried about the safety of Kalyani. When Kalyani goes out to worship Śiva on the eve of the Chaturdaśī, Suryakanta requests the army chief of the Nawab to go back to his place and not to indulge in such a ghastly act as kidnapping Kalyani but Surendra is adamant. He orders his soldiers to shoot Suryakanta and proceed on with their work. But at the right moment Mukunda Ghosh, a companion of Shankar and Dharendra Datta, comes and saves Suryakanta. Surendra is beside himself with rage at this. In the fight that ensues Mukunda Ghosh is arrested and Dharendra Datta faints. When Kalyani returns after worshipping Śiva the Moghul soldiers surround her. She faints when she sees them. Surendra is carried away by her beauty and starts talking loosely. But as soon as he wants to catch her by the hand Shankar and Pratapaditya reach the place and kill Surendra and save Kalyani.

Fourth act—On the other hand Akbar is shown discussing Bengal affairs in his court. He has come to know that Pratapaditya has reached Delhi. He also remembers at this moment the differences that have erupted between Maharana Pratap and Mansingh. In the meantime a gatekeeper comes with a letter from Mansingh which gives a detailed description of the insult meted out to him by Rana Pratap and his solemn pledge that he would not come back to Amer without defeating him (Pratap) and in the event of his not being able to do so ending his life. At that very time Toderhall while describing the condi-

tion of Bengal informs the Emperor that king Vikramaditya has taken to Sannyāsa and that complete anarchy prevails in the kingdom of Jessore. Moreover Bengal has not paid the tribute for the last three years and no explanation from the ruler there for this default has been received. Akbar orders proper enquiry into this. He thinks that the Nawab of Bengal keeps to himself all the tribute that accrues to him from his territory. Immediately Shankar and Pratapaditya are called for. They readily appear before the king in the court. Todarmall then asks him as to why he has taken to poetry and has left administration of his country to others. Shankar at this enquires as to what has led Todarmall to imagine that Pratapaditya is not interested in administration. Todarmall sarcastically remarks that how is it that no tribute was received from Bengal for the last three years. He also enquires from Shankar as to who he is. Shankar tells him that he is a Brahman, the minister of Pratapaditya. He also informs him that Vasantarai has laid a plot to keep Pratapaditya away from the throne of Jessore and therefore has sent him to Delhi under the pretext of acquiring higher education. Akbar is impressed by the personality of Pratapaditya and says that in case he (Pratapaditya) is ready to deposit the tribute in the royal treasury he would be announced the king of Jessore. Pratapaditya has enough pocket money. He readily deposits the money. Pratapaditya is announced the king. Even the Nawab has to obey what he says.

Fifth act—Nawab of Bengal brings his army to invade Jessore. Madanmall, a spy of Pratapaditya, enters Nawab's army. He sends reports about each and every movement of the enemy to Pratapaditya and Shankar. The army chief of Nawab asks Madanmall as to the side from which they should launch an attack. Madanmall indicates the wrong side. At his instance the Nawab orders his army to encamp at a particular place. The Nawab is aristocratic by nature. He is shown a beautiful photograph of Kalyani. Another man brings some dancing girls for his enjoyment. In the meantime Shankar attacks his army and the Nawab has to yield before him. Shankar would have killed the Nawab but for the intervention of Pratapaditya. He (the Nawab) however is put under arrest there and then.

Sixth act—Though Pratapaditya has been announced the king he does not allow himself to be puffed up. He respectfully bows before Vasantarai. Vikramaditya divides his kingdom into two parts giving one to Pratapaditya and the other to Vasantarai. He also orders for the construction of a new fort in Dhumaghat for Pratapaditya. Vikramaditya further orders for

the release of the Nawab and his order is immediately carried out. The whole city of Dhumaghat is decorated in order to celebrate the coronation ceremony of Pratapaditya. All the Brāhmaṇas are invited and are lavishly feasted.

Seventh act—Out of jealousy Virendra Varma, the teacher of Pratapaditya, spreads the rumour that Mansingh is coming to kill the king of Jessore. Pratapaditya invades the kingdom of Orissa. Akbar becomes suspicious of the popularity of Pratapaditya. After some time Pratapaditya kills Vasantarai. The widow of Vasantarai goes to her parents. In Delhi after the death of Akbar, Salim comes to occupy the Moghul throne. Durjansingh, the son of Mansingh, attacks Jessore. Udayaditya (the son of Pratapaditya) and Durjan Singh have a good fight. Udayaditya kills Durjan Singh.

Eighth act—Mansingh is very sad at the death of his son. He is also worried because he finds that Bangal now has no fear from Delhi. Raghava, the son of Vasantarai joins Mansingh and supplies him with every kind of information. While Mansingh is discussing with Raghava the right moment for launching an attack on Pratapaditya, Pratapaditya swoops upon him and Mansingh has to yield before him. He wants to make peace with Pratapaditya to which he agrees. Pratapaditya, however, does not regard the treaty binding and orders his army to attack. Mansingh condemns Pratapaditya for disloyalty to the Emperor but Pratapaditya laughs this charge away by saying that patriotism is certainly better than disloyalty. Pratapaditya with his bravery and courage wins the battle. With this the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Vikramaditya, Pratāpaditya, Sankar Chakravarti, Vasantarai and the Nawab of Bengal are the main male characters in the play. Kalyani is the main female character.

Vikramaditya—He is the King of Jessore and father of Pratapaditya. He is a god-fearing man. Left to himself he is an unassuming simple-hearted man, but to his misfortune he is surrounded by bad persons. Vasantarai, his cousin brother, wants to inherit the throne. That is why he always poisons his mind about Pratapaditya which disturbs him all the more because he is already weighed down with the cares and the worries of the state and yearns for the peace of the mind. He wants to go to Banaras and leave everything to his son and cousin brother Vasantarai. He gives expression to these thoughts of his in the following words :

विक्रमा—(सनिर्वेदम्) हन्त भो ! परमदुर्लभा खलु शान्तिः संसारे । येन हि अश्रान्तपरिश्रम-

सङ्कुलं कर्मजीवनमतीतम्, सुविस्तीर्णमर्जितमिदं यशोरराज्यम्, चतुरचूडामणैः
श्रीमतो वसन्तस्य हस्ते विन्यस्तश्चास्य समस्तो भारः, वत्सः प्रतापोऽपि नितराम-
साधारणः कर्मनिपुणः संवृत्तः, जराजीर्णश्चास्मि, तथापि हृदयमहर्निशं परिस्पन्दते
विशेषसमृद्धिसाधनाय ।¹

"Vikrama—(*In a sad mood*) Oh, peace is highly difficult to obtain in the world. I have passed a life of intense activity; obtained this vast kingdom of Jessore and placed its entire burden into the hands of highly clever Vasanta. My son Pratapa too is highly extraordinary and expert in his work. I too have become worn with old age. Even then my heart throbs day and night for obtaining still more wealth."

Pratapaditya—He is the son of king Vikramaditya. He is a fearless young man whose only ambition is to free Bengal from the clutches of the Mohammedans. Fortunately he is assisted by Shankar, a youngman, who like him is eager to free his motherland from the yoke of the foreigners. When Shankar asks the attendant as to by whose order he is not allowing him to do hunting in the forest he (the attendant) praises his prince (*Pratapaditya*) in the words which bring out forcefully the qualities of head and heart of the young hero :

पार्श्वगतपुरुषः—एष हि तत्रभवतो यशोरेशितुर्विक्रमादित्यस्यात्मसम्भवः सार्थकनामा

प्रतापादित्यः । योज्यम्

देशानुरागपिशुनां किल शैशवेऽपि

साकं चकार शिशुभी रणरूपखेलाम् ।

पुत्रं प्रजाञ्च सममेव समीक्ष्य दत्तो

तुल्यां पुरस्कृतिमिहापि तिरस्कृतिं वा ।²

"The attendant : He is *Pratapaditya*, the son of *Vikramaditya*, the ruler of Jessore, who has justified his name.

He even in his childhood staged a mockfight with his companions which gave a foretaste of his patriotism. He makes no distinction between his son and his subjects in matters of punishment and reward."

Pratapaditya is a fearless warrior. He is not afraid of even the most powerful enemy. It is he who clearly and openly condemns the Nawab for his misdeeds and maltreatment of women :

प्रतापः—नवाब ! वङ्गेश्वर ! किमेतत् ?

1. Second act, p. 18.

2. First act, p. 10.

वितरसि गुरुदण्डं स्वल्पदोषेण दीने
हरसि परकलत्रं दण्डदानच्छलेन ।
स्मरसि सततमेव स्वन्तु वङ्गाधिनाथं
स्मरसि न जगदीशः कश्चिदस्तीति किञ्चित् ।¹

"Pratapa—O Nawab, the lord of Bengal, what is it ?

You award heavy punishment on a miserable one even though his fault be small; under the pretext of punishment you kidnap others' wives. You always think of yourself as the lord of Bengal and do not remember that there is someone else too who is the lord of the universe."

Pratapaditya combines in himself the three qualities of an obedient son, a fearless warrior and a powerful administrator.

Shankar Chakravarti—A patriot by nature, a good administrator by experience and a faithful friend by instinct, Shankar is virtue personified. Pratapaditya is carried away by his impressive personality. Says he :

प्रतापः (सविस्मयमात्मगतम्)—अहो ! क एष युवा निर्भयमानसो वितनोति वैचक्षण्यम्,
विवृणोति च कार्य्येण साहसालङ्कृतं बाहुबलम् । न वा राजतया मां जानन्नपि
विनयेन वर्त्तते । अथवा

सहायसून्योऽपि गुणान्वितो जनः
नैवानुगत्यं भजते प्रभोरपि ।
दण्डस्तरीबन्धनरश्मिसंयतः
महाप्रवाहे स्थिर एव लक्ष्यते ।²

"Pratapa—(with surprise, to himself).

Who is this fearless youngman who shows his brilliance and by his action exhibits the prowess of his arms possessed of boldness ? Even though he knows that I am a king he does not behave politely towards me. Or a meritorious person, though without any companion, does not bow even before a king. The rod supported by a rope tying a boat is seen standing still even though there be a strong current."

Shankar sacrifices everything to obtain freedom. His wife is surrounded by enemies who want to kidnap her. Fortunately Shankar has some faithful friends like Suryakanta and Dhirendra whose help saves her life as well as her honour.

Vasantarai—He is a villain who tries to lay his hands on everything and does not want to leave anything for Pratapaditya, the rightful heir to the

1. Fifth act, p. 91.

2. First act, p. 9.

throne. But Destiny favours Pratapa and he gets his due.

Nawab of Bengal—He is a typical Mohammedan character. Though holding a responsible post he does not do his duty. He comes to chastise Pratapaditya and attacks his kingdom. But even when launching an attack he indulges in dancing and drinking. This leads to his defeat and ultimately to the loss of his position. He also loses favour with the emperor.

Kalyani—She is the wife of patriot Shankar. She knows that her husband is out on a big mission. She spends her days in loneliness, still she does not lose courage. She is a great devotee of Lord Śiva. She is quite a talented lady :

कल्याणी—(कथञ्चिदाश्वस्योत्थाय साकूतम्) धर्मः अघर्म इति समाजप्रयोजनम्, देवो दानव इति लोकस्वभावविभागः, ईश्वर ईश्वर इति दुर्बलानामाश्वासः, दैवं दैवमिति विपन्नानां सान्त्वनाप्रयोगः, वेद. स्मृतिरिति बालानामलीकप्रलापः ।

"Kalyani—(Somehow feeling consoled and getting up with some idea) Dharma or Adharma is something which belongs to society ; god or demon is the division of human nature ; God is the consolation for the weak ; Fate is an effort to give peace to those who are in trouble ; Veda and Smṛti are the useless babble of the foolish."

She is a devoted wife. When Surendra asks her to accompany him to the palace of the Nawab she reproaches him and tells him that come what may, a virtuous woman would never follow a wrong path :

कल्याणी—आः पाप ! दुरात्मन् ! दूषयन्नपि पूजास्थानमद्यापि जीवसि ? जल्पसि चाजस्रम् ? तदिदानीमेव
 शिरो नमतु वासुकेः, पततु भूतलं प्रस्खलत्
 क्षितौ लुठतु भास्करः. किरतु सेन्दुतारा नभः ।
 जगद्दहतु सर्व्वशो ज्वलितकोटिकालानलः
 विलोक्यतु विक्रमं भुवनमार्यसत्याः क्षणात् ॥

"Kalyani—O you wicked wretch, you live on still even while desecrating a place of worship and go on speaking ceaselessly. So let the universe right now witness the power of a noble chaste woman. Let the head of Vāsuki bend, let the earth tremble and fall, let the sun roll on the earth, let the sky scatter the moon and the stars, let the conflagration bringing destruction envelop the universe and burn everything."

1. Third act, p. 46.

2. Third act, p. 48.

M̐vārapratāpam

INTRODUCTORY

The play M̐vārapratāpam is written by Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa. The writer says that he was encouraged to write it from the good reception that his previous play Vāṅgiyapratāpam received from the public. The play has six acts and 111 pages. It was staged in Calcutta under the auspices of the Pracyavani Institute.

PLOT

First act—Maharana Pratap Singh is informed that Man Singh, the Moghul general, has come to see him. When they meet, Man Singh tells Pratap that they should take their meals together. Pratap Singh considers it an insult to do so and retires saying that he has developed headache and is therefore unable to join him in meals. Man Singh is very quick and does not take long to understand that Pratap does not want to take meals in his company and just wants to excuse himself away. Both exchange hot words. Pratap then realizes that it would not be possible to avoid a conflict now. When Man Singh leaves in a huff all assembled there take pledge that they will take simple food, sleep on beds of straws and would not even touch luxuries till their goal of driving away the Mohammedans is reached.

Second act—This act gives us a glimpse of the condition of women at that time. Pr̥thviraj, the court poet of Akbar, has a beautiful wife Kamalā. She is very unhappy thinking that Rajputs have forgotten all about their glory and have now become slaves of the Moghuls. In her heart of hearts she has immense regard for Pratap Singh because it is in him that she has found the only man who has not yielded to the Moghul empire. She prays to Almighty to endow him with endless power. The fame of Kamalā's beauty reaches the emperor. He asks Pr̥thviraj to bring her to the ladies' festival and assures him that she is sure to win the first prize. Kamalā sees through the evil designs of the Moghul, but still comes to attend the festival. There she is carried away by the beauty of the garden. She happens to come to a secluded place where a woman garden-keeper looking at her beauty, first engages her in talk and later tries to catch hold of her in the hope of getting a good reward from the

Emperor, but Kamalā whips up her knife. At this the garden-keeper tries to call out for help from her other companions. But Kamalā proves to be too clever for her. She slips out of the gate and goes out of the garden in a palanquin.

Third act—This introduces us to Akbar in a worried mood. He thinks that it is very difficult to rule over a country like India. If he tries to please one he would displease the other automatically. If one thing pleases the Hindus, the same thing displeases the Muslims. As he is assailed by these thoughts Man-Singh comes and describes in detail the insult and humiliation meted out to him by Pratap Singh. The Emperor is happy to see the two Rajputs at logger heads. He wants to send an army under Man Singh's command. But Man Singh prefers to fight under Salim's command. This pleases Akbar all the more.

Fourth act—The playwright introduces this act with a humorous interlude which makes the play quite enjoyable. The scene begins with the entry of the three Brāhmaṇas whom the Upādhyāya invites to pray for the victory of Rana Pratap. But all of them turn out to be blockheads who would not understand anything. They have no knowledge of Sanskrit. Next a terrible battle is shown to be in progress in the battlefield of Haldi Ghati. Shakti Singh who was angry with Pratap and had earlier left him is filled with love and affection for him (Pratap) after he has realized the meanness of Man Singh. Pratap Singh is entrapped among the enemies. Jhala Singh, in a bid to save his life puts on his (Pratap's) turban on his head. The enemies take him to be Pratap and kill him. Pratap Singh has to flee the battlefield. His horse Chetak takes him out of the enemy-ring but two soldiers of the Moghul army still chase him. Shakti Singh engages them in fight and kills them. He approaches Pratap and asks for forgiveness. Both the brothers meet each other affectionately. Pratap Singh's horse Chetak is injured and falls dead on the way. Shakti Singh offers him his own horse and sends him to a safe place. For himself he mounts a horse belonging to one of the enemies and comes back to his place.

Fifth act—Pratap Singh has to suffer many hardships. His resources are severely strained; he is living in hills; his wife grows very weak, her power of resistance almost broken; his son Amar Singh is fed up with the life in exile and wants to return to the fort of Kamalamir. But inspite of all this Pratap is unbending and unyielding. But then there occurs a fateful incident in his life which shakes him to his very roots. Once Pratap's wife makes a bread out of wild grass and gives it to her daughter. A wild cat appears and

snatches it away from her. The poor girl starts crying; she is mortally tormented by hunger. Her mother also weeps bitterly because she cannot see her daughter in that state. Pratap Singh at this loses heart and immediately drafts a letter of treaty and sends it to Akbar. Therein he expresses his willingness to accept the emperor's sovereignty.

Sixth act—Akbar is mighty happy to receive Pratap's letter. He sends its answer in Sanskrit ślokas written by Prithviraj (the court poet) who happens to be a friend of Pratap. Though he is serving the Moghuls he is proud of his friendship with Pratap who is leading a free life and has guts to face the might of the Moghul empire. When he comes to know that even his self-respecting friend has sued for a peace treaty, his blood boils. He writes ślokas capable of double meaning. On the face of it they set forth what Akbar wants to convey but inwardly they have a deeper meaning which just contradicts the apparent meaning. The second meaning conveys to Pratap that by writing that letter to the king he has committed a big blunder. Prithviraj suggests Pratap that he should fight to the finish and remain free, never for a moment giving himself to the thought of becoming subservient to Akbar. When this letter reaches Pratap he feels immensely encouraged and with the help of his other friends wins many forts. He celebrates his victories by holding a big ceremony. His teacher Suprabhaddeva comes there and blesses him saying that he would be victorious ever. With happiness all round the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Pratap Singh—One of the greatest heroes of medieval Indian history Pratap Singh has inspired many a writer over the centuries to base their themes on him. Scores of poems, plays and biographical sketches have been written on him and many more are still being written. One of these is the present play. It adequately fulfils the author's desire to remind the present generation of the greatness of the past by recreating the life-history of the old heroes.

There is much that can be written about Pratap. He had multifacet personality. He was a courageous man, a brave warrior, an uncompromising freedom fighter. He was very firm in his resolve. In this he had before him the ideal of his ancestors. He reminds his subjects of this :

प्रतापः—तर्हि स्मरन्तु भवन्तः—ऋषिरपि परशुरामः प्रतिज्ञारूढ एव त्रिःसप्तकृत्वो राजन्य-
विनाशेन निष्ठुरतानिष्ठामनुष्ठापितवान्, भीष्मोऽपि प्रतिज्ञामाश्रयन्नेव राज्य-

वर्जनपुरःसरं नैष्ठिकब्रह्मचर्यं पालयितुमलमासीत्; पार्थः किलार्जुनोऽपि च
प्रतिज्ञागुणादेव रवेरस्तगमनात् पूर्वं जयद्रथमस्तं गमयितुमशक्नोत् । तेन च
वयमपि तामेव प्रतिज्ञामाश्रयामः ।¹

"Pratap—Now you should remember that Paraśurāma, though a sage, set a record of cruelty by killing the Kṣatriyas twenty one times simply for honouring his word. Similarly, Bhīṣma too forsook the throne in obedience to his vow and was able to carry out the resolve of lifelong continence. Arjuna, the son of Prthā, also, by virtue of his promise, was able to kill Jayadratha before the setting of the sun. Therefore, we too are firm on our resolve."

Pratap and Shakta were step brothers. They had differences among them. But when Shakta rises to the occasion and forgetting his differences saves his (Pratap's) life he finds Pratap equally responsive. The words that he utters after this lay before us the warmth of his heart and his love for his brother :

(सानन्दोच्छ्वासम्) शक्त ! प्राणाधिक !

स शिथिलमुपगच्छन् कैकयीसूनुरेकां

मुदमददत्त रामे काननान्तस्तदानीम् ।

सरभसमुपगच्छन् शैलभूमाविदानीं

मयि किल ददसे त्वं तां मुदं जीवनञ्च ॥²

"Pratap—(with a sigh of relief) O Sakta, dearer to me than even my life !

In old times Kaikayī's son (Bharata) approached Rāma in the forest and afforded him unique pleasure. Similarly thou too approaching me hurriedly affordest the same pleasure on the mountain region and givest me new lease of life."

Circumstances when adverse can break even the hardest of hearts. There come moments when even the strongest of persons finds himself on a point of collapse. One such moment comes in the life of Pratap too :

प्राज्यं राज्यं विभवि नगरञ्चाध्यकारि द्विषद्भिः

प्रायः हृद्या लयमुपगताः सर्वथैवास्मि निःस्वः ।

1. First act, pp. 17-18.

2. Fourth act, p. 67.

जायापत्यान्यपि सुरपुरं यातुमुद्युज्जतेऽस्मिन्
मामद्यापि त्यजसि नहि किं दुर्दमाशापिशचि ॥¹

"My extensive kingdom and the prosperous (capital) city have been captured by the enemies. The majority of my beloved people have perished and I have become totally impoverished. At this hour of plight my wife and children are about to leave for the other world. O irrepressible hope, O thou wicked wench, doest not thou foresake me even now?"

1. First act, p. 87.

Sivājīcaritam

INTRODUCTORY

The play 'Sivājī-caritam' is written by Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa. It is published from Calcutta in 1361, Bengal era.

The author says in the Preface that he has faithfully followed the history of Shivaji and made no changes in the story. Characters too are the same as are found in history books. There is only one difference, viz; whereas in some of the history books of foreign or native historians, Shivaji (Shivanand Singh) is described as a dacoit, in the present play he has been shown 'to be a truly great man, great in thought, word and deed.' 'To describe a truly great man like Shivaji as a dacoit', says the author, "is a travesty of facts, a blaspheme which is to be shunned like a live charcoal from a crematorium."

PLOT

First act—After prologue Shivanand Singh (Shivaji) is shown sitting with his colleagues in the Pāṭhaśālā. He has come to study but when he sees the sad plight of his motherland he wants to leave everything and even sacrifice his life for its freedom. He tells his friends and colleagues Govinda Singh and Bhaskar Sharma that they should take a pledge to free it (their motherland) from the yoke of the foreigners and not waste away their prime of youth in studies. All the colleagues first hesitate but when Shivaji presses upon them the importance of this work they all offer themselves.

Second act—The school which was founded by Sahnath, the father of Shivaji, is closed due to lack of students. But Shivaji gives the Upadhyaya Maheswar Shastri enough money to enable him to live comfortably for the rest of his life.

Shivaji obtains the fort of Torāṇa from Karimbaksh, an ease-loving and indulgent administrator. Accompanied by his soldiers Shivaji enters the fort disguised as a showman. There he defeats the licentious Karimbaksh and conquers the fort.

Third act—Nadirshah, the ruler of Bijapur, is furious when he comes to know that the fort of Torāṇa has passed into the hands of Shivaji. To take revenge he puts his cabinet minister Sahnath, the father of Shivaji, into prison.

Fourth act—Jayanti, the mother of Shivaji, is shown as engaged in a talk with Bhairavī in the temple of Kātyāyanī. She tells her that she is sad because she is a woman and is therefore not as free as a man to fight with the Mohammedans, otherwise she would have taught the Moghuls a lesson. Meanwhile she is informed that her husband Sahnath has been put behind the bars. This news makes her still more miserable. But after a short while she is informed that Shivaji has sent a message to Nadirshah warning of reprisals on his captured soldiers in case he does not set his father Sahnath free immediately. The warning has its effect. Frightened Nadirshah sets Sahnath free. Shivaji too releases his prisoners. Jayanti is happy to hear about all this. At this stage the information comes that Afzal Khan, an army commander, is coming from Bijapur to seek an interview with Shivaji and wants to have a personal talk with him on the terms of the treaty.

Fifth act—Afzal Khan is a crooked man. The purpose of his visit as given out is to discuss with Shivaji the terms of the peace treaty but the real motive behind this is to kill Shivaji. He tells Shivaji that he wants to meet him alone. Shivaji understands his motive. So he goes to meet him fully prepared. While embracing each other Afzal Khan tries to kill Shivaji but before he advances, Shivaji quickly attacks him with his 'Baghnakh' and kills him. When the army commander is killed the army becomes leaderless and runs helter skelter. Shivaji is thus able to score a victory over the Mohammedans even without firing a single shot.

Sixth act—In the Viṣkambhaka both Bhalchandra and Baladeva, the assistants of Shivaji, are shown having a talk. In the course of their talk they show concern over the fact that the Emperor of Delhi has sent an army under the command of Shayesta Khan to punish Shivaji though he (Shivaji) has done him no wrong. On the other hand, they are happy that Jayantidevi, the mother of Shivaji has saved Poona on her own with unique bravery. Meanwhile Jayantidevi appears before them in military uniform and says that men may sometimes lose heart but not the women of Mahārāṣṭra who are brave enough to face the enemy.

Shayesta Khan, the chief of the imperial army, is having a discussion with his commanders in the course of which he expresses his intention to behave decently with his enemy. Meanwhile Bhaskar, a colleague of Shivaji, comes to see him (Shayesta Khan) and requests him for permission to take the dead body of one of his relatives through the fort. His plea is that as the sun is setting it would be difficult to reach the cemetery in time if they

go by the outer road. 'It would be very kind of him,' says he, 'if he (Shayesta Khan) allows them to take the dead body through the fort.' Shayesta Khan allows him to do so on this condition that he and his companions go completely unarmed. Shivaji enters the fort by placing a bundle of the weapons on the cot and covering it in such a way that it may look like a dead body. When they come inside the fort they pick up their weapons from the cot and attack the enemy. Shayesta Khan runs away terrified. The fort thus passes into the hands of Shivaji.

Seventh act—Hirachala and Shantashila talk to each other and say that Aurangzeb has sent Jaisingh to suppress the ruler of Bijapur. Shivaji has helped Jaisingh in winning Bijapur. Aurangzeb is pleased with Shivaji's bravery and has bestowed upon him the title of Chatrapati. He has also invited him to Delhi.

Aurangzeb wants to arrest Shivaji through a trick. He invites him (Shivaji) to Delhi but when he comes there he insults him by giving him a seat meant for persons of lower rank. Shivaji's feelings are injured and he wants to return to Mahārāṣṭra immediately but he is astonished to find himself a prisoner of the cunning Emperor.

Eighth act—Shivaji pretends illness and daily sends out basketloads of fruits for being distributed as alms. One day he himself comes out hidden in one of the fruit baskets. The Moghul emperor when coming to know of his escape orders a chase but Shivaji kills his chasers and safely reaches his country.

Ninth act—Aurangzeb sends Murardan Singh, the son of Jaisingh, with two other army chiefs Saiyad Khan and Badaruddin to fight with Shivaji. Shivaji, with the assistance of Bhaskar Sharma and Govind Singh, gives them a good fight and scores a decisive victory. The Moghul chieftains meet with a sad fate.

Tenth act—The coronation ceremony of Shivaji is celebrated with pomp and show. Rajamata Jayanti is very happy at this occasion. Guru Ramdas himself appears and blesses Shivaji. All the relatives assembled there feel very happy. Shivaji thanks all those friends of his with whose help he was able to obtain the kingdom. The play ends with the utterance of Bharatavākya by Shivaji.

CHARACTERIZATION

Shivaji—Shivaji is a well known hero of Indian history. His character has been very faithfully represented in the present play. From his very childhood he is shown as burning with the desire of freeing his motherland.

For this he gets inspiration from his mother who in his childhood had told him of the stories of the ancient heroes. He has no interest in studies. His heart burns when he sees Mother India crushed under the heavy feet of the Moghuls. He makes up his mind to free her (Mother India) from their clutches. He swears before his friends :

हिन्दुस्थानाद् यवननिकरं सेनयोत्सारयन्तः

शोधन्येव प्रसभमवनीधूलिजालं विरूढम् ।

देवान् विप्रान् निजनिजपदे स्थापयन्तस्तथान्यान्

कुर्यामास्मिन् पुनरपि वयं धर्मराज्यप्रतिष्ठाम् ॥¹

"May we again establish in India the *Dharmarājya*, the rule of law, driving away forcibly from there with the help of our army the hostile Muslim hordes like a heap of dust by a broom and putting the deities, Brāhmanas and others in their due places."

Shivaji has inherited the qualities of fearlessness and bravery from his father Sahji who does not care for Nadirshah's threats though he is his employee. He praises his son for his daring exploits and tells Nadirshah candidly :

साहः—(अन्तःसहर्षम्) सम्भवति । श्रुतं हि श्रोत्रपरम्परया यदसौ कामयते धर्मराज्य-
प्रतिष्ठाम् ।²

"Sah (*with a happy heart*)—May be, it has come to me from ear to ear that he wants to establish the *Dharmarājya*, the rule of law."

Of course to establish this *Dharmarājya*, Shivaji has to undergo many troubles and hardships. The incident of his interview with Afzal Khan is a case in point. The quickness and cleverness shown by Shivaji at that time is highly praiseworthy. His religious tolerance and catholicity of outlook cannot go unnoticed even at the hands of his enemies. Shayesta Khan records his appreciation of him in the following words :

पश्य, शिवानन्दः खल्वयमस्माकमुपासनाशालायां स्वस्यामिव श्रद्धामादधाति, स्वधर्ममिवा-
स्मद्धर्ममपि मानयति निःसहायां च यवनयोषां जननीमिव सगौरवं पुष्पाति । तदसौ वीरः सर्वथा-
नुवृत्तवीरधर्मा च ।³

"Look, this Shivananda has the same reverence for our place of worship as he has for his, has the same respect for our religion as he has for his, looks after a helpless Muslim lady with all respect as if she were his mother. He

1. First act, p 13.

2. Third act, p. 36.

3. Second act, p. 62.

is thus brave and is one who has really followed the duties of a brave man."

Shivaji is a man of self-respect. He does not allow himself to be cowed down before an enemy. But this does not mean that he is haughty and conceited. He is all respect and humility before his elders. That is why he says :

शिवा—शिक्षितापि स्वयमुन्नतस्योन्नीतस्य च शिरसो नतिर्देवानां गुरुणाञ्चान्तिकमन्तरेण
कथं सम्भवति ?¹

"Shiva—Even though the bending of the head raised by itself or deliberately is learnt, still how can it be possible before those other than the deities and the preceptors."

Shivaji loves freedom. Like a lion he does not want to live in chains. That is why when Aurangzeb tries to capture him deceitfully he proves too clever for him and makes good his escape.

Not only this, he persuades others also to follow him in freeing the motherland from the clutches of the Moghuls. Murardan Singh, the son of Jaisingh tries to persuade Shivaji to surrender to Aurangzeb but far from doing so Shivaji asks him to follow the same path as he has chosen for himself and raise the banner of Hindu society high :

शिवाजी—वयस्य ! अहमपि भवन्तं ब्रवीमि—जहीहि यवनपक्षम्, युज्यस्व निजजातौ,
दिसृज जगतीविततां जुगुप्साम्, अर्ज्य शरदिन्दुमुन्दरं यशः, भूयः समुत्थापय च
भारते विजयवैजयन्तीं हिन्दुजातस्य ।²

"Shivaji : Friend, I too say to you, give up siding with the Moham-medans. Unite with your own people, cast off the worldwide contempt, earn fame as charming as the autumnal moon and again raise in India the Hindu society's victory banner."

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

One of the great writers of the present century Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa occupies a place in the history of contemporary Sanskrit literature which is all his own. A poet, a playwright, a novelist, a critic all rolled into one he has vastly enriched the Sanskrit literature with his writings most of which have unfortunately not seen the light of the day. But whatever little has come to light is sufficient to earn him undying fame.

1. Seventh act, p. 86.

2. Ninth act, p. 116

Śrī Siddhāntavāgīśa is a traditionalist so far as dramatic technique is concerned. He employs most of the dramatic devices mentioned in dramaturgical texts, Viṣkambhaka, Garbhāṅka, Cūlikā and so on. Another peculiarity of his plays lies in the titles the acts have in them. In this, however, his plays do not stand alone. They have good company in Mul Shanker Maneklal's three historical plays which too bear appropriate titles mentioned in the colophons.

Śrī Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa is a great patriot. In his motherland he sees the image of the whole earth :

विद्याबुद्धिसमृद्धिसिद्धिविषयेष्वद्यो जगच्छिक्षकः
देशोऽसावतिविस्तृतो बहुजनः शूरोऽपि दक्षोऽपि च ।
भाषावर्णपरिच्छदा बहुविधा भिन्नाश्च धीवृत्तयः
मन्ये भारतमेकमेव तदिदं पृथ्वीं किलान्यामहम् ॥¹

"That vast and thicklypopulated country inhabited by brave and competent people which was the first teacher of the world and which imparted to it knowledge, intelligence, prosperity and success is India which to me gives the impression of another earth. It has a multiplicity of languages and faiths in it as also mental attitudes."

The same idea is expressed in a rather brief and succinct form in the following verse of the Mivārapratāpam too :

नानाजातिवचोवर्णवर्मवेशास्पदं बृहत् ।
एकं हि भारतं मन्ये द्वितीयां पृथिवीमिव ॥²

"India, this one vast country with its multiplicity of castes, creeds, faiths, speech and dresses gives to me the impression of another earth."

It is his love for his country that makes him love all that it stands for. He wants to revive the glory of Sanskrit, Indian Culture and Hinduism. This is the prime motivating force of his life work. In the prologue to the Mivārapratāpam he says clearly :

संस्कृतभारती भारतसंस्कृतिरुदयतु पुनरपि भारतवर्षे ।
भवने भवने वदने वदने खेलतु संस्कृतभाषा ॥³

"May Sanskrit language and Indian Culture revive in India. May Sanskrit language come to each house and each tongue."

1. Vāgīyapratāpam. Fourth act, p. 56.
2. Mivārapratāpam, Third act, p. 30.
3. Ibid , First act, p. 1.

He is, however, more forthright when through the mouth of one of his characters Mahesvar Shastri in *Śivājīcaritam* he says that Sanskrit is the root of all the Indian vernaculars and if the root is destroyed, like the twig of a tree which does not get sustenance from the root, the vernaculars would get dried. He further says that if such a contingency were ever to arise the śāstric injunctions which are all in Sanskrit would get destroyed, the performance of the sacrifices would cease, the courtesies would disappear and in course of time the Aryans would become the non-Aryans :

Thus says he—

भाषाणां भारतीयानां मूलमेकं हि संस्कृतम् ।

मूललोपे च शाखेव सा सर्वा शोषमेष्यति ॥

तेन च विनश्यन्ति संस्कृतभाषानिवद्धा विधिमन्त्रादयः, तिरोभविष्यन्ति यागप्रभृतयो व्यापाराः अन्तर्वास्यन्ते च सर्वे शिष्टाचाराः, क्रमेण चाय्याः खल्वनाय्या एव भविष्यन्ति ।¹

It is this revivalist spirit of his that makes him go in for those plays—there is only one exception, the *Virājasarojinī* which has been treated separately under the head 'mythological plays'—that propagate the glory of Hinduism by resurrecting the story of those old heroes of India who sacrificed everything for protecting the honour of their country against the onslaughts of the foreigners. Pratapaditya, Pratap Singh and Shivaji, the three heroes of his plays, represent in them the fearlessness, steadfastness, bravery and patriotism, righteousness and courage which are necessary in holding out against the Mohammedans who were infinitely more powerful than they. The author is conscious of the bitter truth that wherever the Hindus suffer defeat it is not the superior might of the invaders which accounts for it. It is their disunity, their mutual conflicts, their mutual destruction which is responsible for it. Through the mouth of Mansingh in *Mivārapratāpam* he gives expression to this view of his :

हिन्दुरेव हिन्दूनां विकृतः कुरुते क्षतिम् ।

मुद्गरीकृतलौहं हि लौहं दलति शाश्वतम् ॥²

"A perverted Hindu alone destroys a Hindu. This is true for all times that iron when fashioned as a mace pounds iron."

But he does not stop at merely recording this fact. He goes on to draw valuable lessons from History, as for example, when he says that unity

1. *Śivājīcaritam*, Second act, p. 17

2. *Mivārapratāpam*, Third act, p. 39.

is the greatest strength of any society :

एकताशक्तिर्हि सर्वाभिमानिनी ।¹

And therefore Hindu society is to be knit together and if it is done, it can repel any attack of any outsider.

He further says through the mouth of his characters :

भास्करः—वयं च भिन्नवर्णा अपि तिलतण्डुलवदेव घटयिष्यामो भवतः संसृष्टिम् ।

चन्द्रः—तथा मिलिष्यामो यथा नीरक्षीरवदेवास्माकं न शक्यं पार्थक्यं परिज्ञातुं केनापि ।²

The author, like a true Hindu, very painfully describes the havoc wrought by the Muslims :

यवनविषमभावः सर्वशान्तिं निहन्ति

ज्वलयति हृदि चाग्निं स्यान्नु जाड्यं तथापि ॥³

At many places it is said that the Yavanas destroyed temples, broke idols, molested Hindu women and did many other horrible things. The author is therefore in righteous indignation against them.

Out of his three historical plays it is only the story of Vaṅgīyapratāpam which is rather unknown. The author has based it on an important episode from the Bengal History. He has confined himself only to Pratpaditya's victory over Mansingh. He has deliberately omitted the later story of his defeat at the hands of his enemy when he was captured, put in an iron cage on the back of an elephant and taken to Vārāṇasī where he died because this did not fit in with his pet theme of the glorification of old heroes. The stories of his other two plays, the Mivārapratāpam and Śivājīcaritam, are quite well known having attracted quite a large number of writers in Sanskrit itself to base their works on them. So far as the main incidents in the stories are concerned they are the same as are recorded in history books or are otherwise popularly known. Between Mivārapratāpam and Śivājīcaritam the difference lies in that while the former opens with Mansingh's coming to him (unlike Vīrapratāpanāṭakam of Mathura Prasad Diksīt which opens with his coronation to which he agrees on the advice of his ministers and purohita) (against the last words of his father nominating his younger brother Jagatmal) the latter opens with Shivaji in the Pāṭhaśālā sitting in the company of his friends.

In the Mivārapratāpam Upadhyaya Suprabhadeva has been shown at least thrice—once in the first act when while talking to Shantideva he discloses

1. Śivājīcaritam, First act, p. 12.

2. Ibid., First act, p. 12.

3. Ibid., First act, p. 13.

the incident of Mansingh's insult at the hands of Pratap (who refuses to join him in meals), the second time in the sixth act when he says all about Pratap's suing for treaty, Prithviraj's letter to him dissuading him from this, Bhama Sah's (Bhim Singh's) giving him all his wealth and raising by Pratap a 50000 strong army with its help and the recovery by him of a number of forts, and last towards the end blessing Pratap on his victory over Sahbaz, the Moghul commander. The *Mivārapratāpam* closes with the capture of Sahbaz by Pratap and his companions. The only innovation introduced by the writer in this play is the humorous interlude in the fifth act where Pratap and his queen are shown enquiring from their daughter Indira and son Amarsingh as to which of the two places, Kamalamir and the forest, they like most. Indira prefers the forest while Amarsingh prefers Kamalamir. Amarsingh's appearance with Raghuvamśa in his hand too is quite original and the author's own creation. On a query from Pratap he says that he has finished Pāṇini's grammar and is at present reading the *Raghuvamśa* :

प्रतापः—किमिदं पुस्तकं ते हस्ते ?

अमरः—महाकविकालिदासप्रणीतं रघुवंशम् ।

प्रतापः—इदानीमिदमेवाधीये ?

अमरः—पाणिनीयं शब्दशास्त्रमधीत्याधुना खल्विदमध्येतुं प्रवृत्तः ।¹

But these are minor innovations. The main stream of the story is the same as is generally known from other sources.

It must be said to the credit of the author that the incidents in his historical plays, unlike his mythological play the *Virājasarojinī*, move quickly. The story is never impeded or unnecessarily lengthened. It is only in the *Vaṅgiyapratāpam* and there too in the sixth act that the humorous interlude of Balarama's talk with foolish Brāhmaṇas causing laughter by their idiotic talk is stretched unnecessarily to cover some ten printed pages. If the idea was to create humour it could easily have been accomplished by a more concise and effective way.

Anyway, all told the credit must be given to the author for weaving historical incidents in his plays into a charming well-knit pattern and introducing into them a dramatic element. There is ample suspense here, an expectation, a gasping anxiety, as for example, in the scene in the *Vaṅgiyapratāpam* when Kalyani is threatened by enemies who want to kidnap her.

Now coming to the language and the style we find that they are all ex-

1. *Mivārapratāpam*, Fifth act, p. 82.

cellent. The author does not leave any thing desired in this respect. His fine and well-chiselled expression, his choice of words, his discrimination in embellishing his writings with appropriate figures of speech have earned for him a permanent place in contemporary Sanskrit literature. His deep learning and erudition does not stand in the way of his creation of charming poetry. Rightly does he say of himself in the prologue to the *Vaṅgiyapratāpam* :

दुरूहशास्त्राभिनिवेशिनोऽपि
कान्तं कवित्वं सरसं च दृष्टम् ।
महाकठोरस्य महीरुहस्य
किं पल्लवं कोमलमेव न स्यात् ॥¹

"Even of one given to obtruse texts the lovely and charming poetry is seen. Don't we find that even of a tree very hard a tender sprout appears ?"

In one of his plays the author calls himself :

महाकविप्राप्ययशोऽभिलाषी ।²

'Desirous of the fame attaching to a great poet.' It is really fortunate that this desire of his is quite adequately fulfilled. The author is certainly known as a *Mahākavi* (a great poet) of the twentieth century. His imagination not unoften gives us poetry which is the delight of all connoisseurs. The *arthāntaranyāsas* that he has employed are particularly delightful. There are numerous examples of it in his works. Some of the most charming ones bear reproduction here :

(क) मलिनं ननु मादृशां मनो
न भवेत् सङ्गवशात् सतां शुचि ।
नवकाञ्चनसञ्चयाञ्चितं
नहि लौहं समुपैति पीतताम् ।³

"The impure mind of the people like me would not become pure on account of the contact with the good. The iron, even though lying near a heap of gold, would not become yellow !"

(ख) रुजया विकले कलेवरे
प्रमदो नैव पदं प्रपद्यते ।

1 *Vaṅgiyapratāpam*, First act, p. 3.

2 *Mivārapratāpam*, First act, p. 2.

3 *Vaṅgiyapratāpam*, Second act, p. 19.

मरुता विधुते तरोर्दले
विगलत्येव हि निष्पतन्मधु ॥¹

"In a body afflicted by a disease happiness would never set its foot. In a leaf of a tree shaken by wind the oozing honey would indeed fall off."

(ग) प्रसाध्यमाना सुखदा यथा स्यात्
स्वयन्तु सिद्धा न तथा कदापि ।
सञ्चर्व्यमाणा मधुरेक्षुयष्टि-
र्यथा रसाली गलिता तथा न ॥²

"The pleasure that a family woman gives while she is caressed and prepared would never match the one that were to accrue if she herself were to offer herself. The sugarcane when munched appears more sweet than the juice coming out of it."

(घ) राजा प्रजां दमयितुं यतते सदैव
स्वातन्त्र्यमिच्छति च सा कलहस्तयोस्तत् ।
वह्निं हि गन्धकखनेः शिर उन्निनीषुं
शैलो रुणद्धि तत एव हि भूमिकम्पः ॥³

"The king always tries to suppress his subjects. They on their part want to free themselves from his clutches. There is then a conflict between the two. When a mountain stands in the way of the fire trying to make its way out of the sulphur mine there appears the earthquake."

Songs and dances form an integral and important part of the plays. They are racy and crisp and lend a peculiar charm to the plays. Characterized by excessive alliteration and rhyme they are quite pleasant to read. One such sung by the simple fishermen plying their boats has a naturalness about it and consequently delightful :

अरे आकाशे वहति वातः, भासते मेघः, दृश्यते भङ्गः ।
तूर्णं तूर्णं वाह्य वाह्य सकला नौकाः ।
तोलय जालं चालय पारं
न क्षिप कालं जीर्णा नौकाः ।
प्राप्तो न मत्सः रोदिति वत्सः
अन्तिके कच्छः दूरे गृहाः ॥⁴

1. Mivārāpratāpam, Second act, p. 26.

2. Ibid., Sixth act. p. 98.

3. Śivājīcaritam, Sixth act, p. 56.

4. Vāṅgiyapratāpam, Third act, p. 32.

Similarly befitting and appropriate is the song sung by the Bhils in the *Mivārapratāpam* :

मधु मधु मधुरं सीधु सीधु निकटं पिव पिव चतुरं वीर ।

लघु लघु चरणं बहु बहु करणं संहर यवनं वीर ॥¹

The song sung by the *cāraṇas* during Haldighati battle is kicking and inspiring :

घाव घाव वीर तुमुलरणमध्ये

संहर सततं नहि दया वध्ये ।

शीघ्रं प्रहर प्रहरणशाली

वदने वदतां जय मा कालि !²

A peculiarly fascinating alliteration is found in the song sung by the female dancers in the *Śivājīcaritam* :

कान्तिमन्ति वृन्तवन्ति हन्त सन्ति कानने

प्रसूनानि सुरभीणि लोभनानि शोभने ।³

It is not unusual for an author to repeat himself in his works. There are actual passages in the plays which are common to more than one work of his. As an illustration we may mention the verse :

यद्यमुष्य प्रतीकारं न कुर्यां वीर्यवानपि ।

तदाम्बरं न यास्यामि यास्याम्यम्बरतां पुनः ॥⁴

which is found both in *Mivārapratāpam* and *Śivājīcaritam* or the verse :

दोषी जनो निजमुखे दधदन्यदोषं

कुर्याद्विनिन्दितुमनास्तमदोषमेव ।

कर्षन् मलं हि वदनेन वनं वराहः

आलोडयन् परममेव परिष्करोति ॥⁵

which is found both in the *Vaṅgiyapratāpam* and the *Mivārapratāpam*.

Another peculiarity of the style of the author which cannot go here unnoticed is his frequent dives into history and mythology. In *Vaṅgiyapratāpam* he compares Shankara with Kauṭilya and then goes on to refer to an

1. *Mivārapratāpam*, First act, p. 15.

2. *Ibid.*, Fourth act, p. 55.

3. *Śivājīcaritam*, Second act, p. 26.

4. *Mivārapratāpam*, Third act, p. 34.

5. *Vaṅgiyapratāpam*, Fourth act, p. 66.

historical incident of the capture of Rākṣasa by Kauṭilya and his forcible installation as the minister of Candragupta. Again, in *Mivārapratāpam* he refers through Pratap back to the pages of history : How Sultan Mahmud looted the temple of Somanātha while the Hindus were busy with their worship of Lord Śaṅkara, how Mohammad Ghori vanquished Prithviraj in the battle of Taraori while the latter had felt assured by the treaty the former had entered into with him. Further in *Śivājīcaritam* even apart from the last act where justification is sought from history and mythology for all the actions of Shivaji there is a passage wherein as a counterfoil to the nefarious activities of the Mohammedans Shivaji lauds the behaviour of the Hindu heroes of the past thus falling back upon history and mythology. He contrasts Aurangzeb's killing of his brothers to remove them from his path with the ideal behaviour of the brothers in India like Bhīma etc. who just out of respect for their elder brother allowed themselves to be staked in the gambling bout or Lakṣmaṇa who voluntarily offered himself to accompany his brother to the forest, or Bharata who following the righteous path put the pair of the wooden shoes (pādukās) of his brother on the throne and carried on the administration in their name, or Rāma who apprehending the death of Lakṣmaṇa on account of his having hit against a mighty rock wanted to end his life or Pratapsingh who accepted back with all love and affection his step-brother Shakisingh who had earlier deserted him and had joined his enemies.

Among other stylistic peculiarities of the plays mention may be made of the frequent quotations from earlier works :

- (क) अत एव महामनस्विभिराम्नायते नाम
 स्वः कार्यमद्य कर्त्तव्यं पूर्वाह्णे चापराह्णिकम् ।
 नहि प्रतीक्षते मृत्युः कृतमस्य न वा कृतम् ॥¹
- (ख) ब्रुवन्ति च भामतीकाराः...
 स्फुटतराहमनुभवगम्य आत्मा संशयाभावात् ।²
- (ग) प्रमादतस्तु तन्नष्टं तावन्मात्रं नियोजयेत् ।
 अन्यथा स्तेययुक्तः स्यात् हेमन्यादत्तो विनाशिनः ॥³
- (घ) पापात्मनां पापशतेन किं वा ?⁴

1. *Vaṅgiyapratāpam*, Sixth act, p. 29.
2. *Ibid.*, Sixth act, p. 106.
3. *Ibid.*, Sixth act, p. 111.
4. *Mivārapratāpam*, Third act, p. 40.

- (ङ) विषमप्यमृतं क्वचिद् भवेत्
अमृतं वा विषमीश्वरेच्छया ।¹
- (च) त्रिभिर्वर्षैस्त्रिभिर्मसैस्त्रिभिः पक्षैस्त्रिभिर्दिनैः ।
अत्युत्कटैः पापपुण्यैरिहैव फलमश्नुते ॥²
- (छ) अभिहितं चाप्तैः ...
स्वाङ्गादि वैदिककर्मणः फलावश्यम्भावनियमः ।³
- (ज) श्रूयतां तावद् भवभूतिभाषितम्...
पूरोत्पीडे तडागस्य परीवाहः प्रतिक्रिया ।
शोकक्षोभे च हृदयं प्रलापैरेव धार्यते ॥⁴
- (झ) वपुर्वलाद् बुद्धिबलं गरीयः ।⁵
- (ञ) अग्निदाहे न मे दुःखं न दुःखं लौहताडने ।
इदमेव महद् दुःखं गुञ्जया सह तोलनम् ॥⁶
- (ट) कथापि खलु पापानामलमश्रेयसे यतः ।⁷
- (ठ) राजन् सप्रेममात्राणि परच्छिद्राणि पश्यसि ।
आत्मनो विल्वमात्राणि पश्यन्नपि न पश्यसि ॥⁸
- (ड) विष्णुशर्मामीममेवार्थमाह स्म....
अल्पानामपि वस्तूनां संहतिः कार्यसाधिका ।
तृणैर्गुणत्वमापन्नैर्वध्यन्ते मत्तादन्तिनः ॥⁹

While talking of quotations from the earlier works it will not be out of point to make a reference to the tenth act of the *Śivājīcaritam* where the playwright exhibits his intimate knowledge of the older works from which incidents and scenes are shown to be painted on the canvas, spread out before Shivaji, Guru Ramdas, Mahesvar Shastri, the Upadhyaya, the priest Narayana Sharma and Jayanti, the mother of Shivaji. After Shivaji is crowned king these prominent characters who had assembled for the happy occasion of the coronation ceremony permit themselves certain observations wherein

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 88.
2. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 95.
3. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 94.
4. *Śivājīcaritam*, Second act, p. 17.
5. *Śivājīcaritam*, Seventh act, p. 73.
6. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 88.
7. Ibid., Eighth act, p. 94.
8. Ibid., Ninth act, p. 17.
9. Ibid., Tenth act, p. 121.

they refer to the sacred lore, the proper significance of these observations being unfolded towards the end by Jayanti. Thus Guru Ramdas draws attention of the assembly to a scene from the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa as painted on a canvas by an expert artist. The gods were first disunited, and were consequently defeated by the demons. They then led by Brahmā went to Lords Śiva and Viṣṇu. The entire assembly of gods then became a woman, the Mahāśakti. The united gods then gave their weapons each to the Devī. Then ensued the fight between the goddess and the demons. The Mahāśakti then destroyed the entire army of the demons and beheaded Mahiṣāsura. This Purāṇic incident is utilized by the author skilfully to draw the lesson that in unity lies strength. Mahāśakti is nothing but unity. The author has thus the authority of the sage Vedavyāsa in support of his pet theory of the unification of the Hindu society. Not that this particular incident referred to above only taken from the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, there are actual quotations from it, as for example :

(क) तत्रासुरैर्महावीर्यैर्देवसैन्यं पराजितम् ।¹

(ख) एकस्थं तदभून्नारी ।²

(ग) सेयं सङ्घोद्भवया शक्तिर्महाशक्तिरदीरिता ।

तृणसंहतिसञ्जाता महारज्जुरिवासला ॥³

(घ) ततः प्रववृत्ते युद्धं तया देव्या सुरद्विषाम् ।⁴

After Guru Ramdas, Mahesvar Shastri refers to the two incidents described by Vālmīki in the Rāmāyaṇa, one, where Rāma and Sugrīva enter into a pact and the other where Vālin is killed, the obvious conclusion being that whenever a great thing is to be accomplished the enemy of a friend should be killed even though cunningly. Naryana Swami then draws attention to the Mahābhārata incident where Yudhiṣṭhira deceived his Guru by speaking out the words *Aśvatthāmā hato nāro vā kuñjaro vā Aśvatthāmā* is killed, man or elephant.' Muktakeshi then points out that there should not be any hesitation in withdrawing from the field where such a withdrawal leads to ultimate victory. To illustrate her point she refers to Kṛṣṇa who is said to be god himself, *Kṛṣṇas tu Bhagavān svayam*, fleeing from Mathura in fear of Kālayavana. She further refers to the Mahābhārata

1. Śivājīcaritam, Tenth act, p. 121.

2. Ibid., Tenth act, p. 122.

3. Ibid., Tenth act, p. 122.

4. Ibid., Tenth act, p. 122.

incident of Karna taking to flight when faced with a Gandharva (Citrasena) on the occasion of the Ghosayātrā. The not too distant history of Rana Pratap taking to flight from the battlefield of Haldighati also supports Mukta-keshi. The reference to these historical incidents and age-old authors and works bespeaks the author's deep learning and his capacity to re-interpret these in the context of the conditions prevailing in the days of Shivaji (and even now). This also shows that the author does not suffer from much moral compunction and subscribes to the dictum that everything is fair in love and war. "Whatever moral unjustification there may be for the policies of Shivaji and his diplomatic manoeuvres there is no doubt that these ultimately led to good".

To those who may object to this on the basis of the sacred lore, the author has the authority of the sages and their authoritative texts. This only seems to be the purpose of the author in laying the particular scene in the tenth act referred to above. To some of the quotations the author takes particular fancy and repeats them quite often in his works. They serve his purpose and lend weight and authority to his ideas and expound his views. As illustrations we may mention the line :

वपुर्वलाद् बुद्धिबलं गरीयः ¹

which is found in Mivārapratāpam and Śivājīcaritam both and in the latter too is repeated twice.

The plays have the heroic as the predominant sentiment. All of them carry forceful descriptions of the battles and the wars and the terrible havoc wrought by them. When the armies of Pratapaditya and the Nawab of Bengal meet in the vicinity of Jessore they get locked up in a neck-to-neck fight, a most vivid and graphic description of which is found in the following verse of the Vaṅgiyapratāpam :

तथा हि-शस्त्रीभिस्तरवारिभिः सपदि हृत्कण्ठं छिनत्त्युल्बणः

शूलं विध्यति मुद्गरैर्विदलति प्रासैः समाकर्षति ।

अन्योन्यं खनति प्रदश्य दशनान् नालीकनालैः पुनः

मुष्टामुष्टि कचाकचि प्रकुरुते प्रक्षीणशस्त्रो भटः ॥²

"The fierce soldiers speedily cut throats and pull out hearts with their knives and swords, they pierce each other with their pikes, they pound each

1. Śivājīcaritam, Seventh act, p. 73.

2. Vaṅgiyapratāpam, Fifth act, p. 87.

other with their maces, they drag each other with their spears and when their weapons exhaust themselves they strike each other with fists, pull each other's hair and grinding their teeth dig bayonets into each other'.

When the armies of Pratap and Akbar meet in the famous battlefield of Haldighati, we again meet with a similar description in the Mivārapratāpam :

शक्तः—शम्भुसिंह ! अयमेव सङ्कुलः समर इत्याख्यायते ।

पश्य—

दीर्णो दारयति क्षतः क्षपयते च्छिन्नश्छिनत्त्युल्बणः

विद्धो विध्यति वा धृतो धरति वा श्लिष्टः परं श्लिष्यति ।

हस्ताहस्ति नखानखि प्रकुस्ते नष्टास्त्रकः सैनिकः

मुष्टीमुष्टि कचाकचि प्रहरते वृत्तो रणो दारुणः ।¹

“Shakta—Shambhu Singh, this is what is known as a pitched battle. See—

The fierce soldiers having been torn tear, having been wounded inflict wounds, having sustained cuts inflict cuts, having been pierced pierce, having been captured capture, having come close come closer still, and when their weapons are exhausted they pull each other's hair and fight with their hands, nails and fists.”

When the armies of Shivaji and Aurangzeb meet in Mahārāṣṭra we again have a similar description in the Śivājīcaritam :

तेन च सेनयोरनयोरधुना संश्लेष एव संबृत्तः । ततश्च

अभ्येति गर्जति दधाति भिनत्ति रौति

संशीर्यति क्षिपति हन्ति पतत्यपैति ।

योधः स्वपक्षपरपक्षगतः किलासौ

नष्टा दया सरलता मृदुताप्यमुष्य ॥²

“So the two armies are verily locked up now. And with this :

The soldiers of our and enemy's army approach, roar, put, break, yell, wear off, throw, kill, pounce and withdraw. (The qualities of) pity, straightforwardness and softness have deserted them.”

The author is quite adept in drawing word-pictures. One such we meet with in the Mivārapratāpam where he describes Jhalapati Manna in the

1. Mivārapratāpam, Fourth act, p.53.

2. Ninth act, p. 112. This verse is found very much in the same form in the Vāṅīya-pratāpam too (Eighth act, p. 149).

thick of the battle bringing death and destruction wherever he goes :

समन्तादुपेतान् सपत्नाननन्तान्
निकृन्तन् विभिन्दन् परं पोथयंश्च ।
विमाद्यन् गजेन्द्रो नलानीव भञ्जन्
असिं चालयन् घूर्णतेऽसौ महात्मा ॥¹

"That noble one is going about brandishing his sword, making a short shrift of his numerous foes approaching him from all sides. He pounds them and cuts them. Intoxicated he breaks them as does an elephant the reeds."

Though the predominant sentiment of the plays is heroic, as said earlier, it does not lack in other sentiments too. Of course there is very little of erotic or abominable in them but there is enough of humour, good decent humour. None of his works have the Vidūṣaka. Still the author is able to entertain the audience by means of some humorous scenes interspersed in his work which provide good diversion and are welcome because of the change they provide from the tense heroic. One such scene is found in the Vaṅgiyapratāpam in the sixth act when Balarāma at the instance of his guru Madhava calls out to Brāhmaṇas for offering gifts to them on the occasion of the coronation of Pratapaditya. The Brāhmaṇas that turn up are all blockheads who by their halfbaked knowledge provide a good entertainment. One of them is a smoker. Praising tobacco he says;

किमुच्यते ? ताम्रकूटं हि नाम सर्वभूते विराजमानो महाविष्णुः ।
नारीणां गुडिका विखण्डितदलं दोक्ता च सक्ता पृथक्
नस्यं भूरिमनीषिणाञ्च चुरटं चञ्चद्विलासात्मनाम् ।
हुक्का-गुडगुडिकात्वला-विलसनैः शेषान् समालम्बते
चक्र दर्शयते च्युतं वितनुते मुक्तिं प्रदत्ते परम् ॥²

"What do you say ? Tobacco is verily Mahāviṣṇu present in all beings ? It is a Guḍikā for the ladies, with its leaves pressed it is a differently blended thing called Doktā, it is a snuff for the very wise, it is a cigar for the foppish, the others take to it in the form of Hukkā, Guḍaguḍikā and albalā. It brings forth rings, it goes down and ultimately gives salvation."

Further when he mentions the ten incarnations of it (the tobacco) he cannot but produce a hearty laugh :

1 Mivārapratāpam, Fourth act, p. 60

2 Vaṅgiyapratāpam, Sixth act, pp 99-100.

आल्वालाम्बुचरश्च फुल्लितिकरस्तोयान्तरे शब्दनः
 वक्षःक्षोभकरो महाध्वरगतो धूमध्वजो भूभृताम् ।
 क्षेत्रप्राप्तवनो हलास्त्रसुगतः प्रान्ते च कल्किस्तथा
 एते श्रीहरिताम्रकूटविधृताः काव्यावितारा दश ॥¹

"Growing in the watery bed (as a plant), useful for puffing, producing sound in water, causing burning in the chest, the smoky flag of the kings in a big sacrifice, its rich crop having reached the fields, in a good condition on account of the weapon such as the plough (also Sugata-Buddha, obviously a reference to Buddhāvatāra) dirty (also Kalki-the name of the last incarnation) at the end-these are the ten incarnations in action of the green-coloured tobacco (also Hari-Viṣṇu).

Equally humorous is the description of the Uttararāmacaritam by another Brāhmaṇa :

उत्तरचरितस्य भवभूति ऋषिः, सीता देवता, नानाविधं छन्दः, समासप्रयोगे भीमा शक्तिः,
 कवियशो वीजम्, समेलनं तत्त्वम्, परिपत्प्रीत्यर्थमभिनये विनियोगः ।²

Another most humorous scene occurs in the Mivārapratāpam where too an identical situation is depicted. The three Brāhmaṇas supposed to offer Svastyayana for Pratap's victory in a battle with Mansingh turn out to be total fools. They occasion hearty laughter by their crude talk, an excerpt from which is reproduced below :

तृतीयः—पुत्रवान् भव ।

सर्वे—(हसन्ति)

शान्ति—(सहासम्) अये स्त्री खल्वेषा । तद्वतीति ब्रूहि ।

तृतीयः—(शिरः सञ्चाल्य) सत्यम् पुत्रवान्वती भव ।

सर्वे—(अट्टहास्यं कुर्वन्ति)

शान्ति—अहो ! पुत्रात् परं वानिति न तिष्ठेत् ।

तृतीयः—(सशिरःकम्पम्) बाढम्, वान्पुत्रवती भव ।

सर्वे—(तथैव हसन्ति)

शान्ति—आः पुत्रात् पूर्वमपि वानिति न भवेत् ।

तृतीयः—तर्हि पुत्रवतीवान् भव ।³

The critique on the plays of Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgiśa would not be

1. Vāṅīyapratāpam, Sixth act, p. 100.

2. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 102.

3. Mivārapratāpam, Fourth act, pp. 44-45

complete if mention is not made here of the presence in them of quite a large number of pithy and epigrammatical sayings. A few of the particularly effective of them are reproduced below :

- (क) कः खल्वतुरो दीयमानमौषधमुपेक्षेत ।¹
 (ख) आशयो हृदिशयो हि जनानां
 चेष्टया मुखदशोरनुमेयः ।²
 (ग) कः कुर्यान्मूषकः हन्तुं बृहन्नालीकयोजनम् ।³
 (घ) सर्पः सर्पं दशति शयितं ताडितो हि प्रमुग्धम् ।⁴
 (ङ) अग्निर्हि निर्वाणमलं व्रजत्यपि
 न शीततां याति समीरणेरितः ।⁵
 (च) रिपुश्च रोगश्च विवृद्धिमान् क्रमात्
 नोपेक्षणीयो हि विपश्चितश्चिरम् ॥⁶
 (छ) विम्बमनुवर्तते हि छाया ।⁷
 (ज) उत्तममधमं वा मनोजुक्कूलप्रतिकूलतयैव सर्वस्य ।⁸
 (झ) गुहायां पतितोप्यग्निरुच्च एव घरेच्छिखाम् ।⁹
 (ञ) गुणाश्च दोषाश्च चिरं निसर्गात् संसर्गजाता भुवने भवन्ति ।¹⁰
 (ट) न खलु रासभः पादपे फलति ।¹¹
 (ठ) अप्रमाणमुक्तमग्राह्यं वचः ।¹²

In the end we cannot but take note of the author's predilection for a style, especially in prose, approximating the older prose romances in Sanskrit. A couple of examples would bear us out :

- (क) येषां हि साहसशून्यं मनः, अलसतामयं शरीरम्, काफेर इत्यनुक्तिः पुरस्कारः, यवन-
 पदलेहनञ्च वृत्तिः । अपि च बलप्रकाशो दुर्बलपीडने, सहिष्णुता वेत्तप्रहारे, गाढोद्यमः

1. Vāṅgiyapratāpam, First act, p. 12.
2. Ibid, First act, p. 12.
3. Ibid., First act, p. 73.
4. Ibid., Eighth act, p. 123.
5. Mivārapratāpam, First act, p. 9
6. Ibid., Third act., p. 37.
7. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 76.
8. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 80.
9. Śivājīcaritam, First act, p. 7.
10. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 71.
11. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 70.
12. Ibid., Ninth act, p. II4.

परमानुगत्ये, सन्तोषः संलापमात्रे, निवृत्तिः स्वाधीनतायाम्, वैराग्यं च पुरुषकारे ।¹

(ख) तत्र च प्रविशन्नेव कुक्कुर इवास्पृश्यतया. तस्कर इव घृणया, चण्डाल इवावज्ञया, जिघांसुरिव हिंसया, दृष्टोऽस्मि पौरजानपदैः । अथ तु कश्चिदपि परिचिन्वानोऽपि नालपति, सम्बोधितोऽपि नोत्तरं ददाति, सोत्प्रासमीक्षितोऽपि च मन्मुखं नेक्षते ।²

(ग) अहह दारुणो व्यवहारः । पतङ्गस्य पावके पादप्रहारः, फेरोः केशरिणः केशकर्षणम्, मूषिकस्य च करीन्द्रास्कन्दनम् ।³

Fortunately for the dramatic movement these passages are few and far between and certainly not as common as in the author's other play the *Virājasarojinī*. Of course there is ample prose in them as there ought to be in a play where action is not impeded by overversification, but that prose is simple and easy and not characterized generally by the flourish to which the native poets and playwrights have often the strong urge to succumb.

1. *Vaṅgiyapratāpam*, First act, p. 5.

2. *Ibid.*, Fourth act, p. 57.

3. *Mivārapratāpam*, Third act, p. 33.

Bhāratavijayanātakam

INTRODUCTORY

The play is written by Mathura Prasad Dikshit. It has seven acts and 182 pages. Though it was written in 1937 its printing had to be delayed. The political climate of the time was not favourable for it. When in 1947 India attained independence it was published with the help of the U. P. Government.

The play deals with the problem of India, right from the beginning when she came under the rule of the treacherous Britishers and the long fight of Indian patriots who sacrificed everything for the sake of independence. It is a complete history of the Indian independence movement. The main sentiment of the play is heroic. It records the bravery of non-violent soldiers. The Indians have no tanks and guns; they have only the power of non-violence. Like a seer the author forestalls the incidents which take place some ten years later. It is in 1937 that he can foresee the independence of India.

PLOT

First act—After Nāndī the first act opens with the coming of foreigners to India. Mother India is attracted by their charming appearance and sweet talk and allows them to live here. Her Nepali friend (the State of Nepal is personified as a girl friend of Mother India) warns her that though these people have white complexion their heart is as dark as charcoal and that she should not place too much of reliance on them. But Mother India is too simple-hearted to doubt their integrity and allows them a foot-hold.

On the other hand a foreigner cures a princess of her illness and in return is allowed to carry on his business of cloth in India. He is given the monopoly of the sale of cloth in the market. The foreigner misuses this right. He purchases cloth from the Indian merchants at cheaper rates but sells them at very high prices. When the Indian merchants protest their thumbs are cut in order to disable them for the rest of their life. As a result the entire trade in India languishes while the English people do roaring business.

Mother India is in distress when she sees that her own sons are suffering

from acute poverty while the English people are getting richer. Her Nepali friend encourages her and assures her that she should not lose heart and face the calamity with courage. She also tells her that she would be blessed with brave sons like Tilak, Malaviya, Lajpat Rai, Gandhi and Jawahar.

Second act—Clive succeeds in his plans to destroy Bengal. He takes into confidence Jaffar, the Commander-in chief of the army of the Bengal ruler. Amichand plays a major role in the success of his plan. For this he demands Rs. thirty lakhs. Clive proves too clever for Amichand. He prepares two documents, one original and the other fake. He signs the fake one where he agrees to pay Rs. thirty lakhs to Amichand but in the original copy he makes no mention of this amount. By his cleverness he deceives both Jaffar and Amichand.

Clive attacks Bengal. As settled earlier the army of Shiraj under the command of Jaffar does not fight. Clive easily wins the battle. Prince Nand Kumar also does not play an active part in the fight. All the Commanders of Shiraj stand up against him and Shiraj is badly defeated. Mir Jaffar succeeds him. When Amichand asks for thirty lakhs he is shown the original document where there is no mention of the amount to be given to him. Amichand is badly disappointed. Mir Jaffar, when enthroned sentences Shiraj to death. But Mir Jaffar proves an utter failure as an administrator. He is puffed up with pride after becoming the ruler of Bengal. He does not do his duty properly and as a result the whole administration suffers. Soldiers do not receive their salaries and consequently rise in revolt against him. When the British administrators notice all these lapses in Mir Jaffar's administration they depose him and put Mir Kasim as the ruler of Bengal.

Third act—Mir Kasim is a very good administrator. He is a brave and a very honest and upright man. The Britishers want to make him their fool but when he does not toe their line they dethrone him too. On the other hand when Mir Kasim tries to untie the bonds of Mother India, the English administrator scolds him. Mir Kasim is charged with the offence of interfering with the English administration. He tries his level best to help his countrymen but does not succeed. Warren Hastings charges Nand Kumar with interference in his work and sentences him to death for he (Nand Kumar) had disclosed the fact, that Hastings had taken Rs. one lakh as bribe from the widow of Mir Jaffar and Rs. ten lakhs from Munni Begam. Whenever the torture of the English people becomes unbearable Mother India is shown tied with so many bondages. She is distressed to see the sad plight of her

sons. There is no one to console her, only her Nepali friend is by her side always and helps her with soothing words.

Fourth act—An Indian spy tells Mother India that the greedy officers of the company have raised the tax three times higher. Bengalis cannot pay the tax and so have to suffer at their hands. Mother India is again very sad to know the sorry plight of her sons. On the other hand Hastings is upto making the company very flourishing. For its increased profits he tortures Indians. He fleeces the whole of Bengal to fulfil his ambitions. He sends a spy named Ramnath to know the inner condition of Ruhilkhand and Oudh. The spy comes back with the information that though there is abundance of wealth there the people are against each other and lack mutual co-operation. Hastings finds it the right moment to launch an attack on Ruhilkhand and completely destroys it. Mother India weeps bitterly whenever she recollects this incident. When however Shujauddaulla sends Rs. thirty lakhs to Hastings through one of his emissaries he (Hastings) hands over Ruhilkhand to him though it had nothing left in it now. He does not disclose to anybody else his real purpose for doing so; he keeps it very much up to himself. He knows that Ruhilkhand can again be taken back any time. Likewise Oudh too is destroyed. The Nawab of Oudh is a religious man. After his death his son, a luxury-loving man, wants to relieve his widowed mother of all the treasure. When she refuses to part with it he takes the help of the Company and succeeds in obtaining it. The employees of the Company who help him take away a major part of the wealth. They give the prince only some nominal amount and proclaim him the ruler of Oudh. They keep however all the rights of the administration to themselves. The ruler is a mere puppet in their hands.

Fifth act—The time changes. The men of the Company torture Indians without any rhyme or reason. Indians are awakening to realities and want to free their country from the yoke of the foreigners. A committee comes into being for this purpose. In a meeting the members of the committee tell the general masses that the foreigners are not only trying to snatch away from them all their wealth, they also want to impose upon them their religion too.

The Britishers destroy Sindh. They also incite Sikhs and the whole of India comes under their control. Nepal, the only sincere friend of Mother India, is also separated from the mainland. To make the Company more powerful they announce that if a king dies without any issue his kingdom would automatically pass under the Company.

Some soldiers like Pandey and Vajapeyi think it very cruel to force Indian soldiers to use bullets made of the fat of the cows and pigs. When a British officer compels Pandey and Vajapeyi to cut the opening of the bullets with their teeth they become furious and kill him there and then. All the young men of the country are eager to free their Motherland from the clutches of the foreigners. Pandey awakens the people of Bengal and Bihar, Lakshmi Bai, the queen of Jhansi, cuts the bonds of Mother India. Mother India asks her about the news of the war. Lakshmi Bai tells her that the Britishers are expert in the policy of divide and rule. They have succeeded in putting the Indian army against the Indians.

The queen of Jhansi loses her own kingdom but she continues fighting with the help of the ruler of Kalpi. When that ruler is also defeated Lakshmi Bai joins the Indian army which is up to destroy the English rule. She tries to win over Gwalior. The Indian army is very courageous and gives a good fight to the British army. The defeated British army loses battle and goes to Prayag. But unfortunately the lack of unity in the Indian army causes its defeat. Some one sets fire to the stock of gunpowder with the Indian army which leaves with it nothing to fight with, Mother India and the queen of Jhansi are informed that the Company has won the battle. They both stealthily peep out to see how the English people celebrate their victory. To their utmost dismay they see that the English people have caught hold of Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul king of Delhi. Bahadur Shah is thirsty, When he asks for water they offer him the blood of his own son. Bahadur Shah faints when he comes to know of this. On the other hand, when the queen of Jhansi is left with no alternative than to surrender she throws herself into the fire and ends her life. Mother India cries hard when she sees the pathetic end of her daughter. The Britishers kill the Indian warriors who are fighting for freedom whenever they get an opportunity. Mother India is furious at this. She herself raises her sword and prepares for fighting. She announces throughout the country that every Indian youth should participate in the war of Independence. But the friend of the queen of Jhansi tells Mother India that the time is not opportune for the fight yet. At that very time Victoria is enthroned the queen of England. She tactfully buys India from the Company and takes over the reins of that country's administration into her own hands. She satisfies each and everybody by giving titles and property. All the agitations are suppressed in her time. Mother India also seems happy at the satisfactory administration of the queen.

Sixth act—Secretary Hume establishes a Congress Committee in India by the order of Victoria and at the advice of the Governor General. He tells Dadabhai Nauroji that this Committee will be constituted of some of the most respectful personalities of the country. Nauroji suggests that the national flag should fly on the building of the Committee, so that each and everybody should know that this Committee is being established for the country. After this Bal Gangadhar Tilak informs Mother India that Bengalis have played a major part in the war of independence. That is why the British rulers are furious at them and want to divide Bengal. Mother India is very much disturbed by this news. Khudiram, a fighter for freedom, encourages every Bengali youth to fight against the British rule and kill every white man who comes in his way but Bal Gangadhar Tilak tells him that Mother India has issued instructions to the effect that the fight against the division of Bengal should be non-violent. Khudiram agrees to follow her instructions. The awakened nation is not ready to endure the tortures of the British rule any more. As a result when a European insults an Indian patriot Kalicharan angrily resigns his post. Khudiram too loses his self-control and kills a European with a bomb. As a result he is sentenced to death by the authorities. He dies smilingly for the cause of the country. Another patriot Kanhaiyalal kills Narendra, who has become prosecution witness, with a pistol brought secretly by his (Kanhaiyalal's) sister. He is also sentenced to death by the British rulers. The Europeans are afraid of the courage of the Indian patriots.

On the other hand Germany has conquered France, Russia and Belgium. There is a direct threat to England. Her sovereignty is at stake. Europeans come and request Mother India to help them with her army. In return they would free her after the war. Mother India, simpleminded as she is, sends her brave sons to assist the English army and tells them that they should defeat the enemies of England with all their might. She also helps England with money. But alas when the Britishers win they forget all about their promises. On the contrary they issue a directive that any body asking for independence would be dealt with according to the Rowlatt Act. Mahatma Gandhi is very angry to see all this. He takes the pledge that he would fight against the repressive act. The Britishers do not heed his advice when he decides to fight the war of independence non-violently. Europeans instruct the Commander-in-chief of Multan to kill all the conspirators against the English rule. When, however, he refuses to obey he is sent to jail. Another army chief returns the

Victoria Cross. Likewise all persons on whom were conferred the titles of Rai Bahadur etc. renounce them. Malaviya reminds Europeans the tragedy of Jalianwala Bagh. Mahatma Gandhi refers to the incident of Chaurichaura. Malaviya informs Mother India that infuriated people are destroying foreign cloth by making a bonfire of it. After this Abul Kalam Azad removes the bondage from the mouth of Mother India and removes her handcuffs. Govind Vallabh Pant loosens her chains. From another side come Kher, Ravi Shankar and Abdul Gaffar and bow before her (Mother India). Kher says that the Europeans sent our soldiers to war without even asking us. Mahatma Gandhi then suggests that all Congressmen should resign from the Legislative Assemblies and other Committees. All respectfully bow before his orders. Mahatma Gandhi asks the permission of Mother India for carrying on a non-violent war. Mother India happily permits him and showers her blessings on all her sons for victory.

Seventh act— When the Britishers come to know that the Indians have awakened they play a new trick. They divide Hindus and Muslims on the basis of religion. They arouse in them hatred for one another. They incite the Muslims by pointing out that the Hindus cause disturbance in their religious duties by playing on a band before a mosque. They further tell them that the Hindus will eliminate Muslims when they get independence. Mother India is very sad to know that the sole cause of jealousy between the Hindus and the Muslims is the policy of divide and rule pursued by Englishmen. When an Englishman asks Mother India as to what is going on in her mind she disgustfully tells him that it is the Britishers who have divided Bengal, destroyed Oudh and Bihar, deceived Tipu Sultan by first entering into a treaty with him and then violating it and finally destroyed Sindh and the whole of India. The Englishman is furious at this and throws the net of ordinances on her. Mother India wants to slap him but he takes out his sword and tries to kill her. At that very moment Subhash Chandra comes and beats him. Jawaharlal Nehru also comes and assures Mother India that they will kill that Englishman in an instant. Sampurnanand also comes and tells that as Bhīma tore away Jarāsandha into two similarly he too will kill the Englishman but at that very moment there appears Govind Vallabh Pant. He informs that Mahatma Gandhi has given strict instructions to win over the Britishers by non-violence only. Sampurnanand is not pacified at this and says that he would send the Englishman either to hell or to London. When however Mahatma Gandhi himself appears on the scene all become calm and

quiet. Mahatma Gandhi tells them that the Englishman is their brother. To prove this he embraces him and tells him that the Britishers should peacefully go back to their own country and should not deprive Indians of their birthright. The Englishman is very much impressed by his affectionate behaviour and apologizes for all his past misdeeds. At the instance of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad embrace the Englishman and go away. Gandhi Ji, joined with other people, sings happily. With this the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Mathura Prasad Diksit has condensed in his play of seven acts a full history of 100 years right from the beginning when they set their foot on this soil till the end when they left it after giving independence. A character who is active in one act is shown rather inactive in the next act. This is quite natural because there is a big time lag between the actions of the two acts. Only Mother India is present in all the acts. She is not some individual, she is India personified. There are three main women characters in the drama—Mother India, Nepali friend (who represents the country of Nepal) and queen of Jhansi. All others are men characters. The flow of the story always remains unimpeded. There is no sudden interruption anywhere.

The drama abounds in characters. They appear for a short while and then go away. That is why their characteristic qualities are not very much obvious. It is more convenient to note the qualities of the nations to which they belong. Englishmen are deceitful, treacherous and believe in the policy of divide and rule. They always aim at the good of their own country. While doing this they bring ruination to this country.

Mother India (India personified) is a simple-minded and sincere lady. She is deceived due to her own innocence and simple-mindedness. Indians are ensnared by the Europeans because they lack unity and suffer from mutual jealousies. The main cause of disunity between the Hindus and the Muslims is the lack of understanding among them.

Nepali friend of Mother India always remains by her side. Sometimes she instructs her, at another time she encourages her and yet another time lends helping hand to her bemoaning friends.

Vīraprthvīrājaviṇayaṇāṭakam

INTRODUCTORY

The Vīraprthvīrājaviṇayaṇāṭakam is written by Mathūra Prasad Dikshit. It is a play of six acts and sixty pages and is published by the author himself in 2017 Vikrama era. It is a tragedy in contravention of the rules of Sanskrit dramaturgists.

PLOT

First act—Prithviraj with some of his selected courtiers is shown hunting. Bhondushah, Prithviraj's treasurer, availing himself of Prithviraj's absence from the capital invites Mohammad Ghori to cross the Ghaggar river and invade his (Prithviraj's) territory quietly. A spy informs Prithviraj of this. Prithviraj sends Kaka Kanha to suppress him. The brave Kaka goes to Mohammad Ghori unnoticed and takes him prisoner. Mohammad Ghori is brought before Prithviraj. All the courtiers advise him to put Ghori to death but the kind-hearted king sets him free and asks him to take a pledge before the Koran not to fight against him in future. Ghori takes the pledge in all solemnity. Meanwhile Prithviraj gets the news that Jaichand, the ruler of Kannauj, is arranging for the *svayamvara* of his daughter Sanyogita. He has not invited Prithviraj to take part in it. Prithviraj feels very bitter about this but he knows Sanyogita's love for him.

Second act—Jaichand's relations with Prithviraj are not good. He not only not invites Prithviraj at the *Svayamvara* ceremony, he has his iron statue made and installed at the gate to deliberately insult him. His daughter Sanyogita however does not share her father's enmity with Prithviraj; nay she is deeply in love with him. She insists that she would not go to the assembly to select her husband, Jaichand is furious at this and wants to kill her. His wife restrains him and promises to make her obey her order. She succeeds in persuading her to go to the assembly. But there too she acts on her own. She selects the iron statue of Prithviraj for her husband. At the same time she sends her friend to him (Prithviraj) telling him all about her love for him. Prithviraj is already present in Kannauj. Sanyogita's friend arranges their meeting for a short while. Both the lovers meet and Prithviraj promises to take Sanyogita with him after some time.

Third act—Prithviraj with the help of his courtiers carries away Sanyogita and claims victory. Jaichand is furious at this and tries to capture him but all in vain. His friends provoke him to such an extent that he wants to avenge this defeat with the help of the foreign invader Mohammad Ghori.

Fourth act—Prithviraj is busy making love to Sanyogita. He neglects royal duties and awards punishments indiscriminately. He orders Chamunda, a great warrior of his court, to be put behind the bars because he kills an elephant to save his life. Seeing that Prithviraj has become indulgent all the courtiers begin to behave accordingly. On the other hand Jaichand busies himself with preparations to attack Prithviraj with the help of Mohammad Ghori.

Fifth act—Court poet Chandbardai and a noble man Amar Singh tell Prithviraj that due to his neglect of state affairs all the courtiers have become self-willed. With the help of Mohammad Ghori Jaichand may launch an attack on him any time. Prithviraj then awakens to realities and realizes what a big blunder he has committed in disgracing his officers. He himself goes to prison to free Chamundaraja and honours him.

Sixth act—Mohammad Ghori attacks Prithviraj with the help of Jaichand and other Rajput kings. Prithviraj fights and comes out victorious. But his victory proves to be shortlived. Mohammad Ghori plays a trick on him. He withdraws his army a bit. Prithviraj thinks that the enemy has been put to rout and that his men can afford to have some rest. When his men are taking rest Ghori's warriors pounce upon them. Prithviraj with his army is caught unawares and is taken prisoner. When Sanyogita and other queens learn this they end their life by jumping into the fire.

Mohammad Ghori takes Prithviraj to his country and puts him into prison. One day he ridicules Prithviraj by saying, 'what has become of your strength of which you used to boast so much.' Prithviraj is hurt by this remark and with eyes red with rage tells him that he is a wretched man. He first took a pledge before Koran and later went back on it. Ghori orders that his (Prithviraj's) eyes be taken out. On the other hand Chandbardai who was away to Kangra to put Hahuliraj on the alert returns and hears the sad news of Prithviraj's defeat and arrest. He feels very sad at this. He goes to Ghori disguised as a Yogi and after influencing his attendant succeeds in meeting him. He tells him that he has come to see the extraordinary skill of Prithviraj who can pierce just in the direction of the sound seven bells simultaneously. Mohammad Ghori is excited at this and wants to test Prithvi-

raj's skill. He fixes some suitable day and time for this. Just as Mohammad Ghorī orders, Prithviraj's arrow pierces his heart. Prithviraj then asks Chandbardai to kill him and bring an end to all his miseries. Chandbardai with a heavy heart obeys him. He kills Prithviraj. On his part Prithviraj too kills Chandbardai. Thus they kill each other, for none wants to continue to live after the other.

CHARACTERIZATION

Prithviraj—Prithviraj being a historical figure his bravery and other attainments are very well known and need no testimony. The author has tried to depict his character as truly as he could. Generally he has neither used exaggeration nor introduced any significant innovation.

History provides evidence for the only cause of Prithviraj's defeat viz. his overconfidence of his bravery. In the present play we have a very touching scene which depicts Mohammad Ghorī begging for his release. Prithviraj's ministers and other courtiers ask him not to do so but Prithviraj in his self-complacence orders his release :

पृथ्वीराजः—(स्वभुजमवलोकयन्) निःशस्त्रोऽयं किं विद्यास्यतीति बन्धनान्मुच्यताम् ।

मुहम्मदगौरी—साधुरसि, श्रुतप्रभावादप्यधिकोऽसि. परमकारुणिकश्चासि ।¹

"Prithviraj—(*looking at his arm*) He is unarmed. What can he do ? Let him be set free.

Mohammad Ghorī—"You are a gentleman, your magnanimity excels all that I have heard of it. You are exceedingly merciful."

In bravery he is matchless, in love he is steadfast. When Sanyogita requests him to take her with him he readily agrees. He too feels the pangs of love, perhaps more acutely than even Sanyogita :

मदनस्त्वां तापयते मां दहति सर्वतस्त्वदासक्तम् ।²

"Cupid torments you; but he burns me for I am more attached to you." The above line is obviously an echo of Kālidāsa's verse in *Śākuntala* where he says :

तपति तनुगात्रि मदनस्त्वामनिशं मां पुनर्दहत्येव ।

ग्लपयति यथा शशाङ्कं न तथा हि कुमुद्वतीं दिवसः ॥³

Even when he is in prison he is fearless. He castigates Mohammad Ghorī in characteristically forthright words :

1. First act, p 7.

2. Second act, p 20

3. *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam*. Third act, verse 15.

वीरपाननिमग्नास्तु शस्त्रास्त्रपरिवर्जितान् ।

पद्मासनसमासीनान् हत्वा बलसि दुर्मते ! ॥¹

"O wretched man you have killed those persons who were drinking, sitting in the Padmāsana pose, and who had no weapons with them and after having done so you now boast !"

Sanyogita—Sanyogita is a true Rajput girl. She loves Prithviraj because he is a brave man, Even the scoldings and threats of her father cannot make her change her decision.

1. Sixth act, verse 8, p. 53.

Vīrapratāpanāṭakam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Vīrapratāpanāṭakam is written by Mathura Prasad Dikshit. It has seven acts and 195 pages and is published by the author himself in the year 1961.

PLOT

First act—The play begins with Jagatmall, the step-brother of Pratap, aspiring for the throne of Mewar, but being the eldest and the most capable of the brothers Pratap is persuaded successfully by the elders and the ministers to accept the throne. At the time of coronation Pratap takes solemn pledge to free his country from the yoke of the Muslims. A harlot who comes to entertain Jagatmall is so much impressed by the patriotic feelings of his brother that she takes to Sannyāsa, becomes a Yoginī and pledges to inculcate the feelings of patriotism in the minds of her countrymen.

Second act—Pratapsingh feels shocked when he comes to know that Mansingh's father has married his sister to Akbar and that Mansingh has become his (Akbar's) feudatory. Next we are introduced to a scene in the forest where due to a quarrel over the killing of a wild pig during a hunting expedition Shaktisingh crosses sword with Pratap. When Rāmaguru comes in between the two brothers (who were earlier in no mood to listen to him) and falls dead being pierced by the swords of both of them the fight ceases and Shaktisingh leaves Pratap and goes over to Akbar's side in order to teach Pratap a lesson.

Third act—Puffed up by the high post he holds in the Moghul army Mansingh comes to meet Pratap but Pratap insults him by avoiding to take meals with him. Mansingh flies into rage and takes a pledge to avenge this insult.

Fourth act—This introduces us to Pratap taking counsel with some of his advisers. He thinks it better to move away from Mewar to a safer place. When Akbar's army is in the interior of Mewar to invade it, he orders systematic destruction of crops, fruit trees etc., and the pollution of the water of all the tanks, wells and lakes so that nothing may fall into the hands of the enemy. He also announces death penalty for those who move into the

vacated places. Then follows the scene of a Bhil girl dissuading her brother from killing Pratap by whose order his father had been killed for straying, though in all ignorance, to the vacated place for grazing the cattle in company with his son-in-law who has been put in confinement. The Bhil girl accompanied by her younger brother goes to Pratap's palace where she seeks an audience with him and tells him of the vicious plans of her elder brother. Pratap's heart is touched by this incident. In the meantime the elder brother is brought before him in chains. Deeply impressed by the Bhil girl's solicitude for him he orders his release. He also sets the Bhil girl's husband free and hands over the body of the dead Bhil, (the father of the girl) to her. After this the scene shifts to the court of Akbar where the slighted Mansingh pledges before him to vanquish Pratap which pleases Akbar immensely. Under Salim's command a vast army leaves for Mewar. It meets with Pratap's army in the battlefield of Haldighati where after a close neck to neck fight Pratap is defeated. While on his way out of the battlefield on his pet horse Chetak he is pursued by two Mohammedan soldiers whom Shaktisingh, who is now a chastened man having had the experience in the battlefield of Pratap's bravery and patriotic fervour, kills. When he comes face to face with Pratap, he first mistakes him to have come to settle old scores with him but when he throws away his weapons and tells him that he has saved him from the chasing soldiers, he is filled with affection for him. He lovingly embraces him. All past misunderstanding disappears with it. When Chetak falls dead wearied with fatigue and the wounds of the battle, he gives him his own horse and asks him to move away while he himself mounts one of the horses of the soldiers he had killed earlier and goes to the Moghul Camp.

Fifth act— After the battle of Haldighati Salim accompanied with Mansingh and Shahbaz comes to Akbar who expresses surprise at Pratap's escape and supports Mansingh's conjecture that his (Pratap's) life might have been saved by Shaktisingh who might have killed Multani and Khurasani, the two soldiers who were sent to chase Pratap. Just as they are saying this Shaktisingh enters and expresses his desire to retire from Akbar's fort and join Pratap. While on his way to Pratap he conquers the fort of Kinsrur the key of which he presents on arrival as his gift to him. Pratap returns the keys and asks him to keep the fort with him.

Shahbaz had only been biding his time to launch an attack on Pratap. The rainy season over, he moves towards Mewar at the head of a very large

army. Pratap who had taken refuge in Kamalmir, has to flee to a safer place in the interior of the forests when all the lakes and wells etc. of the fort had been poisoned by the ruler of Abu who was in collusion with the Moghuls. There moving from one forest to the other he has to suffer many hardships. And then comes the fateful moment. He is highly unnerved at the cries of his daughter whose only piece of bread prepared out of wild grass is snatched away by a wild cat. He prepares himself to make up with Akbar, drafts a letter of treaty and sends it to him. Prithviraj, his friend in Akbar's court, is pained at this. He tells the emperor that he is not sure of the genuineness or the otherwise of the letter. He wants to test the veracity of it and addresses a letter to Pratap wherein through pun he suggests to him to desist from yielding before Akbar. This once again enkindles the flame of patriotism in the Rajput hero. He makes up his mind not to yield before the Moghul.

Later in the act we are introduced to the sensuous side of Akbar. Even against the advice of his minister he puts Prithviraj's wife Kamala in confinement and begs for love. When however she whips up her knife he feels terribly frightened and slips out after pledging to look upon every Hindu woman as mother.

Sixth act—This introduces us to Bhama Shah who comes to Pratap with the offer of his entire ancestral wealth of 14 crore Mudrās with which Pratap raises a fifty thousand strong army and inflicts defeat after defeat on Akbar.

Seventh act—Pratap is shown to achieve further victories. Having come to know of his superior might Akbar sues for peace. Then comes the Yoginī (the old harlot who had come to sing and dance before Jagatmall) and sings song after song with each one of which some good news for Pratap pours in. In this atmosphere of joy and happiness the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

The main characters in the play are Pratap and Akbar.

Pratap is a great fighter, the warrior possessed of indomitable courage, fortitude and prowess. It was given to him only to stand and face the might of the Moghul emperor.

Akbar, the emperor, tried his level best to humble Pratap but had ultimately to yield before his supreme will. In spite of his vastly superior resources he had to eat a humble pie and sue for peace with Pratap.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

A great writer Mathura Prasad Dikshit occupies a prominent place

among the Sanskrit playwrights of the twentieth century. He is a prolific writer and is known to be the author of about seven plays two of which, the *Śaṅkaravijayam* and the *Gāndhivijayam* are not available at present. Among his historical plays he has written three—the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam*, the *Virāpṛthvīrājavijayanāṭakam* and the *Virāpratāpanāṭakam*. He adopts the usual dramaturgical devices like the *Kathodghāta*, *Patākāsthānaka*, *Viṣkambhaka* etc. but makes a departure from the established tradition in two of his plays, the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam* and the *Virāpṛthvīrājavijayanāṭakam* in that he avoids Prakrits. In the former he goes a step further. He replaces them with Hindi and Newari.

The earliest of his plays the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam* is one of the very few of its kind in Sanskrit. Unlike other historical plays it does not deal with any particular historical incident or historical personage. It is not based on history. It is history itself, the history of India from the coming of the British down to the achievement of independence. It is a rapid survey of the Indian political scene for the period of about a century and a half. The playwright is imbued with a burning sense of patriotism and has genuine dislike for the British whom he charges with a systematic destruction of its wealth and rights.

In spite of its being a historical play covering a very wide ground of Indian history and studded with historical incidents its stageworthiness remains without doubt. However, there are a few minor flaws which detract from this quality of it a little. As an example we may mention the eleven provisions of the treaty between Clive and Amichand which have all been mentioned here one by one. This detail, though useful for the subsequent unfolding of the story, does take away a little from the dramatic quality of the play. Again, the summarization towards the end of the play in the Seventh act of all the incidents, connected with the evil deeds of the English rulers which had all been dealt with earlier is, to say the least, not in good taste. The reader is already familiar with what is described in the half a dozen verses there. For him therefore these verses can have little interest.

The next of his plays the *Prṛthvīrājavijayanāṭakam* is comparatively a small play, smaller in size than the other plays, though having six acts. It is a mediocre attempt showing little of originality and full of mistakes, major or minor. It has little of poetic or dramatic element in it. The author faithfully follows the history of Prithviraj and describes the same incidents

as are only too well known. His love for history is commendable but in a drama it should be left to incidents to unfold history; there should be no direct intrusion of it. But here we find exactly the reverse of it in the second act where the two attendants Lalita and Priyamvada just talk history which begins with Anangapala, the ancestor of Prithviraj and Jaichand; his two daughters were Sundari and Kamala, the former being married to Vijayachandra and the latter to Someshwara after Vijayachandra's attempt to marry Kamala forcibly had been foiled by Anangapala. Vijayachandra's son is Jaichand and Someshwara's Prithviraj. Sanyogita is Jaichand's cousin sister. It would have been better if the author had chosen some other clever device to convey all this information if he had to do so. There was no dramatic justification for it actually and the least to do so by means of the talk by menials. The whole attempt seems to be just an effort to convey something and it is exactly this which robs it of dramatic touch. An indirect method should have suited here more.

Again, towards the end Chandbardai's entry into Ghorī's palace, his meeting with Prithviraj and their mutual killing in the very presence of the courtiers seems to be too melodramatic to be convincing. It appears comic and lifts off the veil of heaviness which should be the hall-mark of a tragedy as the present work professes to be.

The Virapratāpanāṭakam very faithfully represents all the known historical facts. There are few innovations here. The court beauty who had been called for dancing before Jagatmall and who later on was a terrified witness to the solemn pledge taken by Pratap to free the motherland from the yoke of the foreigners at the time of accepting throne at the express request of his ministers and others takes to Sannyāsa. She becomes a Yoginī moving about singing patriotic songs and arousing her countrymen to take to arms to defend the honour of the motherland. She thrice makes an appearance in the play. First, in the second act when Mansingh waits for Pratap to join him in meals, second, in the sixth act when Pratap is moving towards a safe place and finally in the seventh and the last act where her presence is utilized by the playwright to make certain announcements with regard to the victories achieved by Pratap. It is a clever dramatic device to bring culmination to the story. Every time the Yoginī sings a song and says something that thing is actually shown to be happening. Actually she only sings the praises of Pratap. She is not there to convey any news but her words on account of Yoga have come to acquire such a power that they do not take

long to come out to be true.

The playwright begins his story with the pleasure bouts of Jagatmall, Pratap's half-brother, who had been nominated by the deceased father Udayasingh to succeed him. The elders of the state want Pratap to accept the throne who first declines it on the plea that it will be against the last wish of his father but afterwards agrees in deference to their (elders') wishes who think that the honour of Mewar will be safe in his hands. In none of the plays bearing on Pratap like the *Pratāpavijayam* or the *Mivārapratāpam* the story has its start with Jagatmall and his supersession by Pratap. Again, in the fourth act, the introduction of the three *Pisācas* eager to help themselves with the flesh of the dead bodies fallen in the battle of Haldighati is too stereotyped and conformist to interest the reader.

The scene of Akbar's efforts to lay his hands on Prithviraj's wife during the *Nauroj* festival has its parallel in the *Mivārapratāpam* too but then there are significant points of difference between the two. In this play the emperor resorts to it more as a retaliatory measure and punishment for Prithviraj, his court poet, whose sympathies with Pratap are a running eye-sore to him. Further he puts Chandika,—in the other play (*Mivārpratāpam*) her name is given as Kamala—in confinement, much against the advice of his minister Viravar, in his palace and himself makes an appearance before her and begs for love, while Chandika's whipping up of her knife and her fierce form scare him out of his wits forcing him to take a pledge not to molest a Hindu woman hereafter and look upon her only as mother and with this enabling Chandika to save her honour. In the other play he does not appear before her; it is the lady keeper of the garden to which she strays having been carried away by its beauty who tries to put her in confinement in the hope of getting a good reward from the emperor while she makes good her escape in a palanquin as the lady keeper goes in to pick up her flute by the sound of which she hopes to send out a signal to her other friends to catch hold of her (Kamala, Chandika).

The plays being historical it was quite natural to come across in them scenes and descriptions of battles and wars where we have the full play of the heroic. One such we have in the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam* :

कल्पान्तप्रचलन्महाधनघटाघोरायमाणस्वना

निर्मयादिसमुद्रभीमनिनदप्रोत्तुङ्गघांकारिकाः ।

मध्यरोदसि नीलधूमवसनप्रस्तारिका मत्सुते-

पक्षैप्सुज्वलनप्रवर्षणकृतो गोलान् शतघ्न्यः शतम् ॥¹

"The canons sent forth hundreds of fire-emitting bullets on my sons giving out terrific noise like the vastness of clouds tossing about at the end of the aeon, roaring terribly like the ocean spilling over its banks and spreading a blue sheet of cloth in the from of darkness between the sky and the earth."

The fourth act of the *Vīrapratāpanātakam* gives us a fine description of the close neck to neck fight between the armies of Pratap and Akbar. Verse after verse rolls on giving an account, vivid and graphic, of the destruction wrought by the brave soldiers of the two armies. The author successfully utilizes this for a full play of his poetical bout. The description of Pratap, fiery and wrathful, is quite picturesque :

हस्ते खड्गं दधानश्चरति किमु यमो वीरसंघं विचिन्वन्
मृत्युर्वा कायधारी गिलति तव भटान् यं विलोक्यान्वमंस्त ।
सैन्यं ते दारयन्सोऽविशदतुलघनव्यूहमध्ये प्रतापो
गच्छंश्चिच्छेद सर्वं कृषक इव महावीरसंघं क्षणेन ॥²

"Is he the god of death come in person carrying a sword in hand and looking for a horde of warriors or is he death personified, devouring your soldiers ? Pratap, about whom the people carried on such conjectures tore off your army and made a thrust into the highly thick formation. In his onward march he, like a farmer, in a moment made a harvest of the hordes of your soldiers."

The two armies get locked up in a terrible fight : swords clanking with swords, spears clanking with spears :

खड्गाखड्गि ततश्चासीदुभयोः सैन्ययोर्महत ।
कुन्ताकुन्त्यश्ववारेषु दारुणं सांपरायिकम् ॥³

The author's expression not unoften catches the spirit of the scene. When Mansingh suffers insult at the hands of Pratap he flies into rage and thunders :

तिष्ठेन्मिथ्या शिरोऽर्तिर्जति वसुमतीस्वामिसंस्तूयमानो
मानो मानप्रदाता प्रधानरिपुगणस्तूयमानासिधारः ।

1. *Bhāratavijayanātakam*, Fourth act, p. 108.

2. *Vīrapratāpanātakam*, Fourth act, p. 116.

3. *Ibid.*, Fourth act, p. 116

चञ्चद्दोर्दण्डबन्दीकृतनिखिलजगद्भूमिपालासिहारी
मेवाडं ध्वंसयित्वा सकलमपि कुलं यावनं वो विधास्ये ॥¹

"Let there be feigned headache. Mana, bringing honour and being praised by the lord of the earth now leaves. The edge of his sword is spoken highly of by the hordes of enemies in the battles. I, the remover of the swords of the kings of the whole world imprisoned by my waving strong arms, will ruin Mewar and turn your whole family Muslim."

It is the same aptness of expression which we find in Pratap's pledge at the time of his coronation :

यावन्मे घमनीमुखेषु रुधिरक्लेदोऽपि सन्तिष्ठते
मांसं वाऽस्थनि तिष्ठति क्वचिदपि प्राणाः शरीरे स्थिताः ।
तावन्म्लेच्छपतेः कथंचिदपि न प्राप्स्याम्यहं निघ्नतां
स्वातन्त्र्यस्य पदं समस्तवसुधां नेतुं यतिष्ये भृशम् ॥²

"As long as blood does not dry up in my veins, or there is flesh on my bones or life in my body, I will not in anyway accept subservience to the lord of the impure (Mlecchas) and will try my level best to bring freedom to the whole earth."

The author is both a poet and a playwright. It is the poet in him who gives the following beautiful description of the scorching midday sun :

तापं संजनयन्स्मृतिं कवलयन्स्तर्षं समुल्लासयन्
दृष्टिं संभ्रमयन्मनो विकलयन् स्वेदाम्बु संचारयन् ।
भूमिं संज्वलयन्नपोऽपचययन् पान्थान्समुत्सारयन्
वह्निं संघटयन् मृगानसितयन् सूर्यः समुज्जृम्भते ॥³

"The sun is blazing forth generating heat, blurring memory, exciting thirst, rolling eyes, creating mental uneasiness, bringing forth perspiration, parching the earth, drying up the waters and driving away the travellers."

In prose too the poet in the writer asserts himself. He then gives up his usual easy style and sports a highflown one as may be seen from the following examples :

(क) ततस्तेऽपि प्रचण्डतरदोर्दण्डखण्ड्यमानासंख्यबला इङ्गलैण्डजातानुगत-युद्धसमुल्ल-
सितान्तःकरणा नन्दकुमारसाहाय्यद्विगुणितसमुत्साहा युयुधिरे ।⁴

1. Ibid., Third act., pp 85-86.
2. Ibid., First act, p. 30.
3. Ibid., Second act, p. 39
4. Bhāratavijayanāṭakam, Second act, p. 40.

(ख) एवं च भवत्प्रतापसमुद्भूतकरीतरक्षुशार्दूलकण्ठीरवभल्लुकलुलायखड्गिजम्बुकगौधेर-
शल्यवृककुरङ्गचीनचमूरुशम्बरगवयशशादिभिर्भयादितस्ततो भ्रमद्भिः क्रूरहिंसकसत्त्वैः
समन्ततो व्याप्तमिवारण्यमिदानीं संपद्यते ।¹

(ग) आः । दुर्जयः प्रतापः । तदीयसैनिका अपि स्वस्वभुजदण्डखण्ड्यमानासंख्यतरक्षुभ-
ल्लुकपञ्चाननसूकराः परमसाहसशौर्याखर्वदर्पसंपन्नाः स्वभूमिरक्षणदृढव्रताः सन्ति ।²

It is the same poet in the writer who asserts himself quite forcefully in the latest of his plays, the *Virapratāpanāṭakam*. The author picks up a famous episode from Pratap's history, Prithviraj's letter to him conveying double meanings, for exhibiting his skill in playing on the words. Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgiśa too gives us a verse in this context which yields meanings, apparently lauding Pratap's efforts for suing for peace treaty but inwardly dissuading him from it and taking him to task for the weakness to which he seems to have succumbed. But Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgiśa's attempt seems to be rather mediocre as compared with that of Mathura Prasad Dikshit. Whereas Haridāsa gives us the following one verse :

एको हि दीपो ज्वलसीह नस्त्वं
तेजस्वितां तत् परिहाय पूर्वम् ।
सन्वेहि मानस्थितिमान् भवाशु
संग्रामचेष्टाविरतश्च भूयः ॥³

Mathura Prasad Dikshit gives us the following four, each one of which makes a delightful reading; the second meaning in them having been woven skilfully requiring some careful thought and circumspection to divine it:

(क) आश्लेषपूर्वं वदतोऽपि चित्तं
न निर्णयं मे समुपैति कञ्चित्
सन्वी विरुद्धस्य दलं नु किं वा
तवेति नो वाक्यमथोत्तरेस्त्वम् ॥⁴

Apparent meaning :

"Even though I speak with pun my mind refuses to come to any definite decision. Please let me know as to whether this communication is really yours or of one who is ill disposed towards the peace treaty."

1. *Virapratāpanāṭakam*, Second act, p. 57.
2. *Ibid.*, Second act, p. 66.
3. *Mivārapratāpam*, Sixth act, p. 92.
4. *Virapratāpanāṭakam*, Fifth act, p. 145.

Hidden meaning :

"Even while I embrace you and write these words I have no peace in my mind. Is this letter yours who are ill disposed towards making peace ? Please frame your reply in the negative."

(ख) सन्धावपूर्वत्रिदशानुभूतिः कान्तो यशोज्ञे कमलानुगन्धः ।
अमध्यमं भास्करमेव मत्वा द्रक्ष्यन्ति लोकाश्च सविस्मयं त्वाम् ॥¹

Apparent meaning :

"In peace you will have an unusual feeling of heavenly beings. Lovely fame as also the fragrance of fortune will also come to be attached to your person. People will look at you with wonder taking you to be the morning sun."

Hidden meaning :

"In peace you will have the experience of *apūrvatridaśā*, an unfortunate state (lit. that *daśā* where the first syllable *tri* is missing), in your form of fame the stench of infamy will appear (lit. the word *Kamalānugandha* will have its *ka* dropped, i. e. it will become *malānugandha*), people will see you with surprise thinking you to be a mere burden on the earth (lit. *bhāskara* with the middle syllable dropped, i. e. *bhāra*),

(ग) किं किमीरचरित्रचित्रितविधिं नौरोजमालोकितुं
चेतो घावति तेऽपि चिन्तितपदस्थाने प्रतिष्ठास्थितेः ।
पृच्छामः किमु गौरवं तव कृतौ किंचिद्ब्रह्म स्वके
स्वान्ते वा त्रपयाज्वनभ्रशिरसस्तिष्ठाम संसद्गताः ॥²

"Is it that even your mind runs to see the Nauroj festival with its variegated things dotted by many-sided personalities, of you who occupy a position he had been aspiring for (other meaning : on account of not getting the position aspired for; *cintitapadasthāne apratiṣṭhāsthiteḥ*). We ask you : should we nourish some pride in our heart for your deeds or should we in the court sit with heads bent with shame."

(घ) लीलासंमीलितेन्दुं तुहिनहिमगिरिक्षीरताराब्जकान्त-
ज्योत्स्नानागेन्द्रशङ्खाजुं नकुसुमसुधाजाह्नवीनिह्वानाम् ।
ऊर्ध्वाधोमध्यभागे निखिलबुधजनैः स्तूयमानां स्वकीर्तिं
हित्वा किं विग्रहार्थं त्रिदशसुखमनाहत्य यास्यात्मनाशम् ॥³

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 146.

2. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 146-7.

3. Ibid., Fifth act, pp 147-8.

"Why should you oblivious of the heavenly bliss bring ruin to you by fighting (other meaning ; for physical pleasures), give the go by to your fame being sung by all the wise people in the upper, middle and the lower regions, the fame surpassing (by its whiteness) the Himalayas, the milk ocean, the stars, the lotus, the lovely moonlight, Airāvata, the conch, the Arjuna tree, the flowers, lime or ambrosia, and the Ganges."

Here and there the author uses onomatopoeic or descriptive words too, a few examples of which are : *dhagadhaga*,¹ *caṭiti*,² *dhānkāra*,³ *caṭāka*,⁴ *taḍ*,⁵ *taḍ*.⁶

At places we find some unfamiliar though not rare words too, as for example, *kauṣeyaka*,⁶ meaning 'sword', *goraṇḍa*⁷ meaning 'Englishman', *āsiddha*⁸ meaning 'imprisoned', *nicula*⁹ meaning 'cane', *abhikāṅkṣad*¹⁰ meaning 'desirous of'.

There also occur in the plays a few words which cannot bear careful scrutiny. The form *āśvāsita*¹¹ should be *āśvasta*, the augment being clearly impossible here. In *kalatraputrasahitaḥ*¹² *putra* should have preceded *kalatra* according to Pāṇ. *alpāctaram* (2 . 2 . 34).

In मा व्यलम्बिष्ठा¹³ the augment is not dropped even though *mā* precedes it. The expression (पृथ्वीराजः) ममैव भवनात् कन्यां हठान्नीयते¹⁴ is simply absurd. It should either be कन्यां हठान्नयति or (पृथ्वीराजेन) कन्या हठान्नीयते । Equally absurd are the expressions :

असौ अपह्रियेत्¹⁵ which should be असौ अपहरेत् and मया तु क्षयनाशनादिः सर्वोऽपि

1. Bhārtavijayanāṭakam, Fifth act, p. 108.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., Fourth act, pp. 115-116.
5. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 155.
6. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 124
7. Bhārtavijayanāṭakam, Fifth act, p. 129.
8. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 151
9. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 165
10. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 170
11. Ibid., First act, p. 17.
12. Ibid., Second act, p. 62.
13. Virapṛthvirājaviṣayayanāṭakam, Second act, p. 19.
14. Ibid., Third act, p. 23.
15. Ibid., Third act, p. 26.

तस्य प्रबन्धः कृतः¹ which should be मया तु शयनाशनादिकस्य सर्वस्यापि प्रबन्धः कृतः ।

The expression एनं गौरीं कथावशेषमेव नेष्ये² too is crude. It should be कथावशेषतामेव नेष्ये ।

In द्वितीयो दृश्यः³ दृश्य which is neuter is used in the masculine while in मेवाडध्वजं तत्रारोपितम्⁴ ध्वज which is masculine, is used in the neuter.

Side by side with these irregularities the works contain some difficult constructions too, which shows the author's deep and intimate knowledge of Sanskrit grammar. We find in his works such *kr̥danta* forms as have reduplication enjoined by *Pāṇ.* ic *karmavyatihāre* (5.4.127), as for example. *khaḍgākhaḍgi*,⁵ *kuntākunti*,⁶ *daṇḍādaṇḍi*⁷ and *namul*, as for example, पशुमारं मरिष्यति,⁸ चौरग्राहमग्नहीषत,⁹ डिण्डिमताडम्¹⁰ ।

The author seems to have a liking for the secondary verbal constructions a few examples of which are :

उदतिष्ठिषत्,¹¹ अभिबुभूषति,¹² दिदण्डयिषति,¹³ दिदण्डयिष्यन्ते ।¹⁴

Generally the works have a classical touch about them but occasionally the vernacular influence too peeps out, as for example, अहं सर्वमपीमं भेदं स्फोटयिष्यामि¹⁵ (cp. Hindi मैं यह सारा भेद फोड़ दूंगा) ।

'I will disclose the entire secret'; वाणिज्यं बहुधा च भारतगतं भूमेरधः प्रापितम्¹⁶ (cp. Hindi नीचे जमीन (मिट्टी) में मिला दिया) बहुधनलाभलिप्सया,¹⁷ where लाभ is unnecessary, लिप्सा itself being formed from √लम् with the desiderative suffix

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 40.
2. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 41.
3. Virapratāpanāṭakam, Fifth act, p. 135.
4. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 135.
5. Bhāratavijayanāṭakam, Third act, p. 82.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 170.
8. Ibid., First act, p. 23.
9. Ibid., Second act, p. 38.
10. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 169.
11. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 91.
12. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 118.
13. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 151.
14. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 154.
15. Ibid., Second act, p. 25.
16. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 103.
17. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 105.

san in the sense of 'with the desire of obtaining much wealth.' हा दीन-हीनवृद्ध-लघुडिके¹ (the metaphor of लघुडिका is typically Hindi) 'O you the support of the old, the miserable and the poor,' दन्तान् पिसन्² (cp. Hindi दांत पीसता हुआ) 'grinding the teeth', द्वैविध्येन संस्तब्ध³ (where द्वैविध्येन gives the sense of 'on account of being in two minds' exactly the same as the Hindi : दुविधा से, हस्तेन हस्तौ मेलयति,⁴ परिहितं वस्त्रं यथास्थानं विदधती,⁵ गतिविधेः,⁶ एषा भवतां महती कृपा, परमिदानीं नास्त्यावश्यकता ।⁷

Even the idiom कुतस्तदानीं बुद्धौ पाषाणः पतितः⁸ repeated again in the form of तदानीं मे बुद्धौ कुत इयं पाषाणशिला निपतिता⁹ is typically modern.

In Hindi we frequently use the expression तब मेरी बुद्धि पर न जाने क्या पत्थर पड़ गये ।

Similarly modern-looking are the expressions :

तदात्मनो व्यर्थमेव क्लेशसम्पादनाय नोक्तम्,¹⁰ त्वत्सेवायां समेष्यामि,¹¹ ईश्वरस्त्विदानीं पाश्चात्यदेशेषु भ्रमणार्थं गतः ।¹²

Another tendency connected very much with the above is the Sanskritization of some foreign words and their use in the plays. As examples we may mention आदावर्य¹³ which is the Sanskritized form of the Urdu Adab Arz¹⁴ or बन्दकी¹⁵ for Urdu Bandagi.¹⁶

The author is a highly learned man and has deeply mastered the ancient lore. It was but natural therefore that while plying his pen he should be unconsciously influenced by earlier works. Some of the verses or lines in his

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 135.
2. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 176.
3. Virapṛthvīrājaviṣṇuśaṅkṛāṇṭakam, First act, p. 9.
4. Ibid., First act, p. 11.
5. Ibid., Second act, p. 19.
6. Ibid., Third act, p. 25.
7. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 48.
8. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 41.
9. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 42.
10. Virapratāpanāṭakam, First act, p. 17.
11. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 126.
12. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 137.
13. Virapṛthvīrājaviṣṇuśaṅkṛāṇṭakam, First act, p. 7.
14. Originally Arabic.
15. Virapratāpanāṭakam, Second act, p. 67, Fifth act, p. 131.
16. Originally Persian.

work can easily be traced to earlier texts. A few examples will make the point clear. The following passage :

अहं त्वां सर्वदुःखेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्ये शुचं त्यज¹ of the Bhāratavijayanāṭakam easily reminds us of the Gīta, अहं त्वां सर्वदुःखेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ।

Similarly सहासमेतत्समुदीरितं सखे विरोधबुद्ध्या न गृहाण मद्वचः² of the Bhārata-vijayanāṭakam is only the same idea expressed in different words as is found in the Śākuntala verse :

परिहासविजल्पितं सखे परमार्थेन न गृह्यतां वचः । (II.)

The author not unoften embellishes his works with alliteration a few delightful examples of which are reproduced below :

- (क) अघटितघटनापटीयसः ।³
- (ख) सुधाघवलिताः कादम्बिनीचुम्बिनः ।⁴
- (ग) तनयाः कुनयप्रवृत्ताः ।⁵
- (घ) एतान् स्वशौर्यकलयामलयोपनीतान्⁶
- (ङ) अविरलकरवालस्फालनोल्लासितानाम्⁷
- (च) स्वहिन्दुधर्मरक्षणे क्षणे क्षणे कृतेक्षणः
क्षमाधिनायकोऽपि यः क्षमास्वरूपतां दधे
कलाकलापकोविदो रणाग्रणीर्दयानिधिः ।⁸
- (छ) विविधविषययाता योषितश्चैकभाषाः ।⁹

While talking of alliteration it will be quite pertinent to take note of the fondness of the author to couple the word मान् with a similar-sounding word. He resorts to it only too frequently as may be seen from the following examples :

- (क) परावर्तमानो मानो मेवाडाधिपतेः ।¹⁰
- (ख) स मानः साभिमानिकः ।¹¹

1. Bhāratavijayanāṭakam, First act, p. 5.
2. Ibid., Second act, p. 26.
3. Ibid., Second act, p. 43.
4. Ibid., Third act, p. 78.
5. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 93.
6. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 127.
7. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 129.
8. Virapratāpanāṭakam, First act, p. 25.
9. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 156.
10. Ibid., Second act, p. 65.
11. Ibid.

(ग) मानो विलोकयतु मे समरे कृपाणं मानं विहाय यदि नैव पलायतेऽसी ।¹

(घ) मानोऽहं त्वपमानभाजनमितोऽहं मानजीवातुकः ।²

(ङ) मानो हित्वाऽभिमानं व्रजति लघुतरं सर्वसैन्याग्रभागे
हस्त्यश्वं पत्तियुक्तं निखिलमपि बलं क्षोभमाणं प्रयाति ।
मन्ये मानापमानात्कुपितमिव चलद्भूलिभिर्धूसराङ्गं
सीमानं लङ्घितुं द्राक् सलिलमिव महायत्नमेतद्विधत्ते ॥³

(च) विलोक्य मां मानसमानभावाः ।⁴

The works have a couple of maxims or aphorisms too which propound some fundamental truth and can easily pass into proverbs. They are :

(क) आपतन्तीनामापदां नैव पादौ समुत्पद्येते ।⁵

(ख) कण्टकोऽसौ मूलतः शोधनीयः ।⁶

(ग) सर्वोऽपि याति निजकर्मफलानुबन्धम् ।⁷

(घ) उदूखले शिरोदाने मुसलात्का भीतिः ।⁸

(cp. Hindi जब ओखली में सिर दिया तो डर किसका ?)

(ङ) स्वयमेवासी कुठारेणात्मपादौ छिनत्ति ।⁹

(च) मुमूर्षोः पिपीलिकायाः पक्षौ समुत्पद्येते ।¹⁰

(cp. Hindi जब चींटी की मरने की नीवत आती है तो उसके पंख निकल आते हैं)

(छ) वकोऽपि हंसगतिमृच्छति ।¹¹

Here and there we meet with excellent gnostic poetry too. The following two verses put forth very clearly and succinctly the duties of a king and in language and style approximate to similar verses in older work on Polity :

1. Ibid., Second act, p 76.
2. Ibid , Third act, p 84.
3. Ibid., Third act, p. 87
4. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 149.
5. Ibid , Third act, p. 83.
6. Ibid , Fourth act, p 88.
7. Ibid , Sixth act, p 153.
8. Ibid , Third act, p 88.
9. Ibid , Fourth act, p. 100.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid , Fourth act, p 109

अर्थकामौ न धर्मोऽपि प्रबाधेत विचक्षणः ।
 धर्मकामौ न चार्थेन न कामेनेतरद् द्वयम् ॥
 ईतावापत्तिकाले च प्रजानां पालनं चरेत् ।
 व्यसनाद् भयतो रक्षेदेष धर्मो महीपतेः ॥¹

The wise (king) should not allow *dharma* to come in the way of *artha* and *kāma*, nor should he allow *artha* to come in the way of *dharma* and *kāma* (similarly) should he not allow *kāma* to come in the way of the other two, (*dharma* and *artha*). The duty of a king is to protect the subjects from the natural and other calamities, troubles and fears”.

We would like to conclude our discussion on the plays of Mathura Prasad Dikshit with a note on the songs. There is quite a good number of them which lie interspersed in the *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam* and *Virapratāpanāṭakam*. They have raciness and produce jingle when sung. By way of specimen we reproduce one each from the two :

- (क) सखी—वीरा मा जहीत रणरङ्गम्
 लक्ष्मीनानारावमहीपतितांत्यालसितसंदङ्गम् ।
 शोषयतार्यदेशसम्भूता रिपुगणमनस्तरङ्गम्
 वितनुत भारतजननीतनया वैरिवाहिनीभङ्गम् ॥²
- (ख) हर हर जय जय देव ।
 जय प्रताप जय भारतभूषण जय वसुधाधिप देव ।
 जय जय धर्ममार्गपरिरक्षक जय मर्यादाभूष ॥
 जय शिशोदियावंशविभूषण जय हरिहरप्रतिरूप ।
 जय यवनाधिपमानविमर्दक जय जय विजयमहेश ॥
 जय तुरुष्कसेनापतिमर्दक जय करवालसुरेश ।
 जय जय माननगरविध्वंसक जय राजकतारेश ॥
 जय जय मानमानविच्छेदक जय मेवाडनरेश ।
 जय संघौ तुरुष्कसंप्रार्थित जय सच्चरितदिनेश ॥
 जय नरपते स्वतन्त्रधराधिप जय जय जितयवनेश ॥³

1. *Bhāratavijayanāṭakam*, First act, p 22

2. *Ibid.*, Fifth act, pp 128-9.

3. *Virapratāpanāṭakam*, Seventh act, pp 188-9

Samyogitāsvayamvaram

INTRODUCTORY

The play Samyogitāsvayamvaram is written by Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik. It has seven acts, one hundred pages and is published by the author himself in 1928. It is based on the story of Prithviraj as depicted in Shripad Shastri's series entitled the "Bhāratavīratnamālā".

PLOT

First act—The play proper begins with Jaichand being shown sitting with his friends and preparing for the Rājasūya sacrifice. He invites all the kings to it but not Prithviraj. Moreover he issues an order that Prithviraj should act as the door attendant in his sacrifice. Another king Samarsingh also refuses to attend the sacrifice. Jaichand, enraged at his refusal, proclaims war against them. Meanwhile he receives a letter from Prithviraj in which he censures him for his misdeeds. Jaichand is furious and incites Balakrai for war against Prithviraj and Samarsingh. Balakrai prepares for war with the help of ten thousand soldiers.

Jaichand has also arranged for his daughter Sanyogita's svayamvara but he is worried about her because she is not feeling happy since she has heard the news of her marriage. Jaichand orders her friends that they should arrange for spring festival and try to know the cause of Sanyogita's unhappiness.

Second act—Spring festival is in full swing. Sanyogita also takes part in it but is not happy. When the girls worship Kāmadeva she feels sadder and falls unconscious. When she regains, her friend Chaturika enquires from her the cause of her worry. Sanyogita tells her that she loves Prithviraj and is determined to marry him. She knows that her father and Prithviraj are sworn enemies but she cannot help it. The mother of Sanyogita hears her words from behind the trees and is very much worried. She tells her that it does not befit her to choose the enemy of her father as her husband. But nothing can change the firm decision of Sanyogita. Her mother is upset and is angry with her. She informs Jaichand about Sanyogita's resolve. Jaichand

is furious at this, He orders that she should be kept in a palace near Bhāgīrathī under confinement for the rest of her life.

Third act—Two royal attendants, Mansingh and Samarsingh are engaged in conversation from which it is learnt that Balakrai and his warriors have been captured by Kanha. Jaichand has postponed the Rājasūya sacrifice due to the death of his brother. He may however celebrate the Svayaṃvara of Sanyogita.

Prithviraj is worried on account of Sanyogita. He is informed that Jaichand has postponed the Rājasūya Yajña but as far as the question of the marriage of his daughter is concerned she would not even think of another person except Prithviraj. He is also informed that Sanyogita is confined in a palace at the bank of the Bhāgīrathī. Prithviraj is happy that Sanyogita is in love with him but is shocked to know that she is enduring so much hardship due to him. On the other hand he is informed that Mohammad Ghori has attacked again. Prithviraj is in a dilemma as to what to do. Should he free his beloved from confinement or should he face the enemy. On the other hand Sanyogita herself sends a love letter to Prithviraj through Madanika (her friend). Finally Prithviraj decides that he should free Sanyogita first and marry her.

Fourth act—Poet Chandbardai comes to Jaichand with Prithviraj and other nobles disguised as his attendants. He has come to find out the exact strength of the army of Jaichand. Both Chandbardai and Jaichand are shown discussing some problems. Chandbardai is more inclined towards Prithviraj. This pains Jaichand. Jaichand is informed that Prithviraj has come in his kingdom but he cannot find any clue to his whereabouts. He entrusts Karnataki, the famous dancer and supervisor of Sanyogita, with the duty of locating Prithviraj. Karnataki comes to the royal court but as she loves Prithviraj she does not disclose his (Prithviraj's) identity to Jaichand. On the other hand she gives some useful hints to Prithviraj.

Jaichand respects Chandbardai and gives him a separate palace for his stay. Karnataki comes to pay her respects to Chandbardai with her friends. There she meets Prithviraj and tells him all about the procedure that he should follow for meeting Sanyogita. At first Prithviraj had planned to fight openly against Jaichand but when Karnataki tells him the whole plot he decides to meet her secretly. Kanha and Lagudirai are prepared to face the enemy at the time of the emergency. Prithviraj goes with Vir-singh to meet Sanyogita in the midnight.

Fifth act—Sanyogita is suffering the pangs of separation. She is so disappointed that even the assurance of Karnataki that Prithviraj is coming to see her cannot make her happy. Prithviraj secretly enters the palace of Sanyogita and they are married there and then. Both are very happy after their marriage.

Sixth act—Prithviraj goes out to arrange for the safe escort for Sanyogita. He orders his spies to be on guard when he would take Sanyogita to Delhi. Sanyogita cannot bear his separation even for a moment. Karnataki explains to her the whole situation. Prithviraj again comes to the palace to take Sanyogita with him. Karnataki bids farewell to her with heavy heart and discloses to her that actually she herself is the princess of Karnataka. It was only due to her love for Prithviraj that she adopted the profession of dancing. Now she wants to remain with Prithviraj for the rest of her life. Sanyogita is astonished to hear her story. Prithviraj happily agrees and says that from now on she would be the incharge of his harem. He invites all the friends of Sanyogita to Delhi at their marriage ceremony. After this Prithviraj takes Sanyogita with him.

Seventh act—Purohita Ramguru is worried when he is informed that Jaichand has attacked Delhi from all sides.

He wants to discuss this subject with Chandbardai but the poet happily discloses to him that Jaichand has told him (Chandbardai) that he would himself give his daughter in marriage to Prithviraj. Now there is no cause for worry. Prithviraj is very happy to hear this. He conveys this happy news to Sanyogita. She is also very happy to learn this because she has regained the love and affection of her father. Karnataki is made the supervisor of the harem of Prithviraj. Jaichand and Prithviraj meet each other happily. They forget everything of the past. King Prithviraj and queen Sanyogita go together in the royal court. There they are informed that an old Mahatma has come to bless them. They invite him most respectfully. The old Mahatma is very much pleased and gives his blessings to them. Here, after Bharatavākya, the drama comes to an end.

Historical facts and dramaturgy — Samyogitāsvayamvaram is historical drama but here the main sentiment is erotic. Prithviraja is a brave hero no doubt but the author of the present play is interested only in his love affair. He is indifferent towards his heroism in battles.

Some popular historical beliefs and stories tell us that at the time of Svayamvara Jaichand placed an iron model of Prithviraj near the door to

make him just an attendant and Sanyogita had, with utmost courage and extra-ordinary love, placed the Varamālā in his neck. At the same time Prithviraj who was hiding himself nearby came out and kidnapped Sanyogita. But the author of the present drama has moulded the story in another way. Here Sanyogita is confined in a separate palace. She sends Prithviraj a love letter. As a result Prithviraj kidnaps her and takes her to Delhi where he marries her.

The historical facts reveal that Jaichand and Prithviraj remained enemies throughout their life but in the present drama Jaichand himself comes to Delhi and attends the marriage of Prithviraj and Sanyogita. They both part as friends.

The idea behind the change introduced in the two major incidents connected with the life of Prithviraj is to make the play more interesting, charming and lively. Love being the predominant sentiment in the play the playwright was naturally not interested in war. Consequently he depicted the two above-mentioned incidents as taking place in comparatively calm atmosphere though historically speaking these ultimately lead to war. The writer was actuated by the desire to make his play a comedy. It is this which led him to present Prithviraj and Jaichand making up with each other forgetting past animosities. In the present play one gets what one wants. Prithviraj gets Sanyogita. Sanyogita gets Prithviraj as well as the love and affection of her father. Karnataki, the friend of Sanyogita also succeeds in having her aim fulfilled. All this has doubtless contributed to the play being a comedy.

CHARACTERIZATION

Prithviraj—He is a Dhīrodātta hero. He is born in a royal family and is very brave. His physical beauty is unmatched. That is why Jaichand says :

आजानुलम्बिदृढमांसलबाहुशाली
संतप्तदीप्तनयनोऽपि मनोऽभिरामः ।
एवं स्वमित्रपरिचारकतां गतोऽपि
स्वाभाविकीं न स पुनः प्रभुतां जहाति ॥¹

"Even with his strong and muscular arms extending upto his knees, and even with his fiery eyes full of lustre, he looks charming. Even though he is in the guise of a servant of his friend, he has not lost his natural grandeur."

I. Fourth act, p. 55.

He gets two different kinds of informations at the same time. On the one hand his beloved Sanyogita is waiting for him impatiently and on the other Mohammad Ghori has attacked his country, He cannot make up his mind as to what to do, He expresses his dilemma in the following words :

एकतो वरतनुः परिरक्षया
सौजन्यतस्तु यवनो विनिवार्यः ।
क्रन्दितस्य ननु हेममृगेण
लक्ष्मणस्य गमितोऽहमवस्थाम् ॥¹

"On one side I have to take care of that beautiful damsel, and on the other side I have to repulse that Mohammedan. I am thus placed in the same circumstances as Lakṣmaṇa, when called out pathetically by the golden deer."

Prithviraj confesses his guilt before Sanyogita, He knows that it is because of him only that Sanyogita suffered so much. But if a man confesses his guilt half of his fault is gone. Prithviraj also expresses the same idea when he says :

प्रतप्यमानावयवा किलैव-
मुपेक्षिता मूढधिया मया त्वम् ।
नैष्ठुर्यमेतत्कृपया क्षमस्व
वितीर्य मे प्रेमभरं कटाक्षम् ॥²

"Thus through carelessness, I have really neglected you, whose limbs are very warm, as I find. Kindly excuse me for my hardheartedness by casting a loving glance at me."

Prithviraj is a king and a king has multifarious duties to attend to. But when he is a lover, he forgets everything else and like a true lover asks his beloved to shower on him her precious love :

मनसिजविशिखाहतं प्रिये मां
पुनरपि जीवयसि त्वमीक्षणाभ्याम् ।
हिमकरकरतापितान्तरङ्गं
सुखयसि चेन्दुमुखि स्वयं कराभ्याम् ॥³

"I, who was completely overpowered by the arrows of Cupid, have been revived by your two eyes. The moon-faced lady, you shall cool by the

1. Third act, p. 39.

2. Fifth act, p. 75.

3. Fifth act, p. 77.

touch of your hands my mind, heated by the rays of the moon."

It may be questioned that when Icchini Kumari was already holding the position of a queen what was the use of Prithviraj's kidnapping and marrying Sanyogita. But history tells us that Sanyogita's love letter was not only a challenge to his love but also a challenge to his bravery. He could refuse the challenge of love but not the challenge of bravery. To marry Sanyogita was a clear defeat for Jaichand. Prithviraj wanted this and he was successful in his purpose. He loves Icchini Kumari so much that he entrusts all the administrative duties to her when he leaves to bring Sanyogita with him. He is a brave king but at the same time his heart is full of love and affection. Seen from this angle his character touches super-human heights.

Sanyogita—She is a living example of a devoted Indian wife. Once she chooses Prithviraj as her husband neither the soft words of her mother nor the angry remonstrations of her father are able to make her change her decision. She is prepared to live under confinement for the rest of her life. She is ready to suffer all the privations and miseries but would not give up love for Prithviraj. When her mother tells her that she constitutes a slur on the fair name of her father she replies with a characteristic candidness :

श्रीवल्लभोऽथ कुसुमेषुरमोघकान्ति-

नैवाप्यलं यदपहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तम् ।

जन्मान्तरव्यतिकरव्यतिषक्तमेत-

न्मातः कथं नु हृदयं विनिवारणीयम् ॥¹

"Oh mother, how can I turn away my mind which is earnestly devoted (to Prithviraj) on account of some incidents of past lives. Neither Viṣṇu nor Cupid of unfailing lustre can captivate my mind so engaged."

By referring to traditional values Sanyogita joins issue with her mother :

पत्युरनुवर्तनं खलु विवाहितायाः श्रुतः परो धर्मः ।

मनसो न वर्तनमम्ब विवाहः कथं स धर्मयि ॥²

"It is the sacred duty of a wife to follow her husband. But if the mind

1. Second act, p. 30.

2. Second act, p. 31.

just does not exist how can the marriage be said to be right ?”

The physical beauty of Sanyogita too finds an eloquent expression at the hands of the writer :

विकसितजलजाक्षी मुग्धपद्माननश्री—
मुकुलकुचमनोज्ञा स्निग्धनालाङ्गयष्टिः ।
निजपरिमललुब्धान्धारयन्ती मिलिन्दान्
लसति ललितलीला पद्मिनी पद्मिनीव ॥¹

“With her eyes like full-bloomed lotus flowers, with the grace of her face like a lotus flower just opened, with the beauty of her breasts like buds (of lotuses), warding off the bees thirsty of her fragrance, she shines like a lotus plant with charming movements.”

But when Sanyogita is suffering the pangs of separation her condition is pitiable. We find description of it in the following verse :

प्रियजनपरिहासं तर्जयन्ती सरोषं
परिजनमनिमित्तं चाक्षिपन्ती विनीतम् ।
मदनदहनदग्धा म्लानगात्री सखी मे
स्वसिति नरपते ते संगमाशानिबद्धा ॥²

“Now indeed she angrily rejects the jokes of her dear friends and blames her polite maids without any cause. My friend, burnt by the heat of Cupid, with faded limbs, continues her life in anticipation of your meeting.”

Moreover, the love letter written by Sanyogita itself bears a testimony to her true love :

निर्घृण मनसिजविशिखैर्विलुप्यमानां त्वदाश्रयामबलाम् ।
प्राणेश्वर परिपालय परमशरण्यः श्रुतस्त्वमार्तानाम् ॥³

“O, lord of my life, save this poor maiden who depends upon you, from the ravenous arrows of unmerciful Cupid. You are known as the sole protector of the distressed.”

She is like a modern Rukminī who herself sends a love letter to her lover for her rescue.

Sanyogita is so much worried that even the assurances of Karnataki cannot console her. She repeatedly asks Karnataki whether her lover would

1. Third act., p 36.
2. Third act., p. 41.
3. Third act., p. 42.

turn up or not and says to herself :

संयोगिता—(स्वगतम्) कथमद्यापि न श्रद्धाति विरहकातरं मे हृदयम् ।¹

"Sanyogita—Why is it that my heart, full of the agony of separation, cannot be pacified ?"

Sanyogita, when going to Delhi with Prithviraj, is in a great fix. She is happy because she is with her lover but is sorry because she has to leave her parental home and friends of childhood. She takes leave from them saying :

रम्या मे वनवासवन्धुतरवो नानालतालिङ्गिताः

स्निग्धे मे शुकसारिके च दयितालापे नितान्तं रते ।

वीरो मे मधुरस्वरानुरणनानन्दोर्मिमालावहे

यास्यन्तीं पतिमन्दिरं निजसखीं सर्वेऽनुजानन्तु माम् ॥²

"Oh, my beautiful trees embraced by a number of creepers, my friends in my exile, oh my dear parrot and sārīkā completely absorbed in the talk of my lover, oh my lute, giving me extreme delight by the reverberation of sweet tunes, let all of you give me permission to go to the palace of my lover."

Sanyogita is a brave and firm-minded girl. She knows how to achieve her purpose, so much so that even Jaichand has to yield before her. But in spite of this we cannot help pointing out that the outspoken Sanyogita of history who openly selects her husband by placing the 'Varamālā' in the assembly and who defies her father is transformed in the present play into a modest girl who does not openly disregard her father. On the other hand she is prepared to suffer humiliation all her life. There is firmmindedness here (in the present play) too but no open defiance.

The description of love—The main sentiment of the present play is erotic. The writer has minutely observed and described even the slightest variations of the feeling of love. While going through the play one cannot but be struck by the author's capacity in handling the erotic sentiment.

Jaichand, the father of Sanyogita, is celebrating her Svayaṃvara. She on the other hand has lost her heart to Prithviraj and has already chosen him her husband. So for her there is no charm left in a Svayaṃvara. When Chaturika asks her as to why she loves the enemy of her father she politely answers :

1. Fifth act, p 68.

2. Sixth act, p. 86.

संयोगिता—सखि अनभिज्ञाऽसि खल्वनङ्गविचेष्टितस्य यन्मामेवं पृच्छसि ।

यतः—

क्वचिद् गुणानां श्रुतिरेव केवला

क्वचिन्मिथो वीक्षणयोग एव ।

स्वप्ने कदाचित्प्रियदर्शनं पुनः-

भवंत्यलं मन्मथवैभवाय ॥¹

"Sometimes the hearing of merits alone, in some mutual glances, and in other cases a meeting in a dream is enough for the predominance of Cupid."

Prithviraj is going to have the first meeting with his beloved. He is in a fix. He says to himself—

किमिति घावति विह्वलतां गतं

प्रणयसूत्रनिबद्धमिदं मनः ।

प्रियतमाप्रणिपातपुरःसरं

भवतु पूर्वमिहाशु विमुक्तिभाक् ॥²

"Why does this mind, tied down by the string of love, wander here and there through excitement? Let it free itself first by prostrating before my beloved instantly."

Prithviraj and Sanyogita are happy enjoying the company of each other. Prithviraj tells that love stands above all the emotions. It is rightly termed as *Śṛṅgāra*, the term etymologically meaning one which goes to the peak (*śṛṅgam iyarti gacchati iti śṛṅgārah*). There is no life without love. That is what he says :

आनन्दमात्रामनुभूय जस्तवो

जीवन्ति साक्षादिति लोकसिद्धम् ।

जने तदानन्दपयोधितुल्ये

कथं वियुक्ते त्वसवो वसेयुः ॥³

"It is directly proved in the world that the life of beings continues so long as they experience even a particle of joy. Then how can the life continue in the absence of a person who is looked upon as an ocean of joy?"

In the company of the beloved the time seems to develop wings. Hours pass into minutes but those very minutes become hours in his absence. Sanyo-

1. Second act, p. 28

2. Fourth act, p. 63.

3. Sixth act, p. 83.

gita discloses this fact to one of her friends :

यस्या मे प्रियसंगमे क्षण इव स्निग्धे त्रियामा गता ।

सैवाहं क्षपितुं क्षणं विरहिणी नैवास्म्यलं विक्लवा ॥¹

"I, O friend, who passed the night as a moment in the company of my lover, am unable to pass a moment without him in this wretched condition".

1. Sixth act, p. 81.

Chatrapatisāmrajyam

INTRODUCTORY

The play written by Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik is of ten acts and 117 pages. It is published from Baroda in 1929. Its plot is based on the history of the reign of Shivaji from 1646 to 1674 (the date of his coronation) as given in the following books—

1. Grant Duff's—'History of the Marathas'.
2. Sardesai's—'Marathi Riasat'.
3. Macmillan's—'In wild Maratha battle'.
4. Shripad Shastri's—'Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaja'.
5. Manker's—'Life and Exploits of Shivaji'.

PLOT

First act—It presents Shivaji engaged in a talk with his friends Esaji, Tanaji and Bajirao. Esaji and Tanaji think that India should be saved from the clutches of the Muslims, but Bajirao is of the opinion that the Muslims are not enemies but friends of India and the Hindus. Meanwhile an attendant informs that the soldiers of Bijapur have killed Netaji and his relatives. They have also kidnapped his sister whom they (Netaji and his relatives) were escorting to her husband's place. Shivaji's blood boils at this inhuman act. After sometime Dadoji Deshmukh joins Shivaji and company. Shivaji explains to his friends the sad plight of the Kshatriyas of India. Their main aim, he explains, is to unite the Kshatriyas all over the country and stand united against the Muslim intruders. Dadoji promises to help Shivaji in this mission of his all his life. While explaining his plan Shivaji tells his friends that they should recover all their lost forts from the ruler of Bijapur. All the persons present there take a pledge to do this unitedly and help each other in adversity. At this time Dadaji Kondadeva comes there. He is the guru of Shivaji. He counsels Shivaji to keep his political movements strictly confidential, because a *mantra* (advice) loses its power if it leaks out, Shivaji promises to act upto his advice. He is happy to note that his guru is pleased with him and that he has his blessings with him. After a short while the Durgapāla of Torāṇa comes to Shivaji and tells him that as he

has become very old he wants to retire and that he (Shivaji) should take charge of that fort. All the people assembled there are very happy at this godsent opportunity. They think it a good omen, which augurs well for their mission. Shivaji is so much encouraged by this that he promises there and then to capture the forts of Purandar which are at that moment under the control of his wicked maternal uncle. Here the first act called *Sāmrājyopakrama* comes to an end.

Second act—By means of a conversation between Esaji and Tanaji the information is given that Shivaji has won many forts with his courage and indefatigable efforts. They also disclose that Tanaji who was considered to be dead is actually living and it is no other than he who has won Rājadurga in the guise of a mendicant. He is now holding consultations with Shivaji on certain important matters. The next scene opens with Shivaji busy talking to Netaji on certain points of war. He and Netaji are worried on account of the paucity of resources because they cannot procure necessary weapons for their soldiers without money. Shivaji prays to mother Bhavānī for help. His prayers are fully answered when he gets huge wealth from an underground treasure. He purchases latest style weapons from foreigners and prepares secretly for war on a large scale.

Third act—Shivaji is shown engrossed in the cares and worries of the State. From some place he gets the happy news of victory while from another place he receives the sad news of defeat. Sāmanta of the Koṅkaṇa fort presents him with the sword of Bhavānī. Shivaji is very happy at this. He is sure of his ultimate success since he has the sword of Bhavānī with him. After this he is informed that Abaji has come to see him. He (Abaji) wants to present to him a beautiful Muslim woman. He thinks that Shivaji would be pleased at the gift but to his utter surprise he finds Shivaji terribly angry with him. He orders that the lady be restored with all due courtesies to her relatives and administers a stern warning to Abaji not to repeat such things. He also instructs that none of his soldiers should take a woman as an object of pleasure. For a Hindu soldier all women are either sisters or daughters. Apart from this small incident Abaji proves himself a brave warrior. Shivaji is very much pleased with him. He presents to him the fort of Kalyan as a prize. Meanwhile Shivaji is informed by his attendant that seven hundred soldiers of the ruler of Bijapur want to join his (Shivaji's) army. Shivaji happily accepts this offer. The ruler of Bijapur feels offended and puts Shivaji's

father in prison. Shivaji enters into a treaty with the Moghul king in order to save his father's life. Rājamātā appreciates this step of Shivaji. His wife also follows his advice in all matters.

Fourth act—Ramdas, the guru of Shivaji gives him the blessing that success would be his companion for ever. He also bestows his spiritual power on him. While on the one hand we have this, on the other we have the army chief of the ruler of Bijapur swearing to capture Shivaji alive. He leads the ten thousand strong army and attacks Shivaji. Shivaji faces this onslaught with remarkable courage.

Fifth act—The commander of the Moghul army sends his messenger to Shivaji conveying him that he should yield and become their subordinate. In his reply Shivaji says that he wants to meet him when he is alone. To this he agrees. They both meet. The commander wants to kill him treacherously but Shivaji proves too clever for him and kills him with his Bāghanakha.'

The fight goes on. Shivaji and Bajirao are surrounded by enemies. Bajirao holds back the enemies till Shivaji reaches the fort in safety. At last Bajirao is killed in action. Shivaji is very much upset at the death of one of his most faithful friends. As the operations go on, the rainy season sets in and the Moghul army is forced to return to its camp.

Sixth act—Enraged by the murder of the commander, the Moghul Emperor orders for the capture of Shivaji. He entrusts this task to the governor of the South. By his utmost cleverness Shivaji attacks that governor in the stillness of the night and kills his son.

Seventh act—The news of the attack by Shivaji and that of the killing of the governor's son are spread all over the country. The disappointed Emperor sends Jaisingh to capture Shivaji.

The Moghul army chief sends a messenger for treaty but on the other hand surrounds the fort of Purandar. Shivaji seeks an interview with Jaisingh to clear the whole situation. Jaisingh tries to entice him with his pleasant talk and promises to remove his army from the fort of Purandar. Shivaji agrees to seek an interview with the Emperor at the instance of Jaisingh.

Eighth act—Shivaji goes to meet the Emperor. But the Emperor humiliates him by assigning him the seat which is well below his dignity. Shivaji is furious at this and comes out of the Court, to find himself, to his utter surprise and dismay, a virtual prisoner. Shivaji acts tactfully and one day comes out of his place of confinement by hiding himself under a basket of fruits. The

Emperor is miserable when he comes to know that his enemy has slipped out of his hands.

Ninth act—Rājamātā, the mother of Shivaji, is shown worried because of the news of Shivaji's arrest. She asks the minister about some further information. But after a short while Shivaji himself comes to her disguised as a mendicant. In the first instance she (Rājamātā) cannot recognize him but when he discloses his identity her happiness knows no bounds. It is at this moment that the information is received that the Emperor has dismissed Jaisingh who not being able to stand the insult has ended his life. Shivaji once again proceeds to capture the forts which he had lost earlier. His friend Tanaji undertakes to win the fort of Singhgarh. The Emperor is busy with his wars with Gandhar. So he is himself eager to make peace with Shivaji. Shivaji avails himself of this opportunity and takes the whole Mahārāṣṭra under his control.

Tenth act—Shivaji once again obtains all the lost forts. The happy news is flashed all over Mahārāṣṭra that Shivaji's coronation is taking place. In his wave of victory Shivaji obtains the Singhgarh fort also but this does not give him unmixed joy, for the loss he has suffered in the death of Tanaji, one of his dearest friends, gives him the shock of his life. The coronation ceremony is gone through with great pomp and show. Rājamātā is happy beyond measure when she sees her life-long dream coming true. At this happy moment appears Guru Ramdas. He blesses Shivaji. The drama ends with the Bharata-vākya uttered by Shivaji.

CHARACTERIZATION

Shivaji—One of the great heroes of Indian history Shivaji has attracted many writers to base their themes on him. A colourful personality he combines in him nobility, heroism, adroitness, suppleness and astuteness. In dealing with the Moghuls he has not unoften to resort to dubious means but then circumstanced as he is he cannot do otherwise. He seems to believe in the adage : Everything is fair in love and war. But here we must stop and before we pronounce a final judgement on his character we must make a note of this fact that Shivaji even while stooping to means which cannot be justified by accepted standards of morality is imbued with the sole and the noble desire of establishing the Dharmarājya. His heart revolts at the atrocities perpetrated on the subjects by the Mohammedan rulers :

शिवराजः—आततायिभ्यः स्वप्रजानिर्विशेषं प्रजानां परिपालनमेव सर्वत्र राज्ञां परमो धर्मः ।
अतो धर्मराज्यसंस्थापनोद्यतस्य मम—

दुर्वृत्तभृत्याहितराज्यभाराः
प्रजाद्रुहश्चार्थपराः कुशीलाः ।
क्षत्रेश्वरा वा यवनेश्वरा वा
सद्यो भविष्यन्ति कृपाणुगोचराः ॥¹

"Shivaji—Everywhere it is the highest duty of kings to protect their subjects like their own progeny from wild ruffians. So,

Those Kings, who have entrusted the work of administration to their unrighteous officers, who are plotting against their subjects and who are vicious will at once be victims of the sword of me who am out to establish a righteous kingdom (dharma^rājya) be they Kṣatriyas or Mohammedans."

Shivaji is a dashing warrior. He picks up conflict with the Mohammedans even when the odds are against him. When Baji, one of his friends, points this out to him he in his characteristic forthrightness declares :

वयस्य साहस एव श्रीः प्रतिष्ठिता ।²

"O friend, prosperity exists in adventure only."

The adventurer does not care for his pleasures, his comfort, his near and dear ones—nay his very life. He just takes a leap :

मानं धनं राजविलासभोगान्
मित्राणि दारानपि जीवितं च ।
हुत्वा रिपुज्वालितहव्यबाहने
संस्थापयिष्ये मम धर्मराज्यम् ॥³

"I shall establish my Dharma^rājya sacrificing honour, wealth, royal pleasures and enjoyments, friends, wife and nay even my life, in the fire enkindled by my enemies."

As an expert organizer he knows how to keep his companions together, Even before launching on his adventurous career he promises them important offices in his kingdom.

शिवराजः—वयस्या भविष्यन्ति भवन्त एवाधिकारपदभागिनो मम धर्मराज्ये ।⁴

It is an irony of fate that a cautious man like him allows himself to fall into the trap of the treacherous Moghul Emperor, of course—through the intervention of Jaisingh. When in Delhi he is imprisoned he feels terribly

1. First act, p. 8.
2. First act, p. 8.
3. First act, p. 13.
4. First act, p. 13.

sad and regrets his indiscretion :

शिवराजः—(निःस्वस्य) नूनं यवनदासस्य जयसिंहस्य वचसि वर्तमानेन मया स्वयमेव
निमन्त्रिते प्राणसङ्कटम् ।¹

But then this feeling of sadness persists only for a while. Soon the great hero is his normal self thinking of positive steps to come out of the den of the Moghuls. After a short while he gives the slip to his enemies and is off to his native place where he reestablishes his hold on the territories he had lost and brings death and destruction to his enemies.

Like Pratap Shivaji has become a legend in Indian history. He is more clever than his predecessor though physically less well built but certainly not the less brave. The writer has adequately captured the mood of the angry hero mounted on a horse making a short shrift of his enemies :

प्रजवतुरगकल्पितासनाञ्च

कवचधरः करवालकुन्तनद्धः ।

अरुणितनयनो रुषा महोद्यः

सरभसमेत्यभितो द्विषां कृतान्तः ॥²

"Here comes hurriedly, the god of death for our foes, riding on a swift horse equipped with an armour, a sword and a lance, with his eyes reddened and looking terrible on account of wrath."

The height of nobility in Shivaji's character comes into view when he not only not accepts a charming woman brought by Abaji for him but reprimands him too :

अरे किमिदं त्वयानार्यमनुष्ठितम् ?³

He asks his minister to have it broadcast in his kingdom that in the Dharमारजा of Shivaji, he and his servants consider the wives of other persons as their daughters :

तदुद्बुध्यतां तारस्वरेणास्मद्धर्मराज्ये यच्छिवराजस्य तद्भृत्यानां च दुहितृनिविशेषाः परस्त्रिय
इति ।⁴

1. Eighth act, p 93.

2. Fourth act, p. 59.

3. Third act, p. 34.

4. Third act, p. 34.

Pratāpavijayam

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik this play consists of nine acts. The playwright has written two other plays *Samyogitāsvayaṃvaram* and *Chatrapatisāmrājyam* too. All of these are historical plays. The author has based his play on the following four books :

1. Mm. R.B. Gaurishankar H. Ojha's *Vira Shiromani Maharana Pratapa-simha*.
2. Shripad Shastri's *Shree Maharana Pratapa simhacharitam*.
3. *Ain-e-Akbari*.
4. *Memoirs of Jehangir*.

PLOT

First act—In the prologue the stage manager and the actress are shown carrying on a dialogue wherein they say that the drama *Pratāpavijayam* composed by Mulshanker Maneklal should be staged. Just as they are doing so Pratapsingh with his minister enters from the opposite side and criticizes the mean nature of the Moghuls. They also discuss that the Rajput kings have no feeling of unity and that they are constantly at loggerheads. They prefer to live under the rule of the Moghuls rather than live independently in union. While in assembly Maharana Pratapsingh informs the courtiers that Mansingh has come to meet them and he should be shown due courtesies. He himself treats him very well but when Mansingh asks to join him in meals only then he excuses himself away. Mansingh is hurt by this insulting treatment. When he too in protest refuses to take meals Rana Pratapsingh appears there and politely explains that only those people can take meals together who belong to the same religion. As Mansingh serves the Moghuls he is no longer a Hindu. That is why he (Pratapsingh) cannot join him in meals. Insulted and humiliated Mansingh swears in the very presence of Maharana Pratap that he would certainly avenge this insult.

Second act—At the time of the battle of Haldighat Pratapsingh is informed that Mansingh is roaming about in a nearby hill with only a few of his

soldiers and if he allows he (Mansingh) can easily be taken prisoner but Pratapsingh does not think it worthy of him and the high traditions of his family to ambush an unwary enemy. He will do so only in the battlefield when Mansingh will come fully prepared for a fight. Soon after this both the armies, the army of the Moghuls and the army of Pratapsingh meet at Haldighat where Chetak, Pratap's favourite horse is killed and he has to leave the battlefield. He is very much worried because he fears that the Moghul army can attack him any moment.

Third act—Mansingh and his commander discuss among themselves that it is very difficult to score a victory over Pratapsingh. Mansingh was confident initially to defeat Pratapsingh but before his suppleness, sharpness and cleverness all his plans seem to be coming to naught. Akbar asks Mansingh and Prithviraj to try to find out the exact locale of Pratapsingh's camp on the hills. He also shows concern at the idleness of the Moghul army in spite of the fact that he himself is present there. Raja Bhagwandas comes and informs Akbar that no information could be procured about Rana Pratap's camp in the hills. Mansingh again swears that he will definitely bring Pratap before Akbar. Akbar is terribly angry and orders that Pratapsingh, his arch enemy, should be brought before him somehow or the other, otherwise dire consequences would follow.

Fourth act—After Akbar returns to his capital Maharana Pratap again wins the fort of Kumbhalgarh, Pratapsingh has delegated all the authority to his minister to look after that fort. Moghul commander-in chief adopts a policy of divide and rule to win over him (the minister) to his side. He sends a messenger to him, inviting him to join the Moghul Empire. The messenger tells the minister that he is a capable man but it is only on account of Pratapsingh that he is not flourishing. If he joins the Moghuls his progress is sure and certain. But the minister does not pay any heed to what he (the Moghul messenger) says. He spurns the offer with the contempt that it deserves. Not only this, he also cautions Rana Pratap about the conspiracy of the Moghuls and says that they should be more vigilant hereafter. Maharana Pratap is very happy to know that his minister is so faithful. Meanwhile a spy informs Pratapsingh that Akbar has ordered Mansingh that he should either bring Pratapsingh as a captive before him or lose his life. In obedience to his command Mansingh is coming to Ajmer with a big army. Maharana also prepares for a fight with Mansingh. Nishadapati, the chief of forest dwellers, offers him his services. Pratap happily accepts

this timely offer. He decides that until the goal is reached he would live in forests. The sister of Prithviraj also accompanies the royal party. Pratap's decision is announced to all the people. Here the fourth act ends.

Fifth act—Prithviraj's sister loves Amarsingh, the son of Pratapsingh, but Amarsingh, though he loves her, cannot marry her because her father serves the Moghuls. Even the romantic atmosphere of mountains fails to change Amarsingh's decision. Now here the clever girl adopts a novel device. Clad in man's attire and with the help of the Rajput army she defeats the enemy. When Pratapsingh comes to know about her bravery he is very happy and is very much impressed. This is the right moment for the girl. She requests Pratapsingh that if he is pleased with her he should fulfil her desire of marrying Amarsingh. Pratapsingh is carried away by her bravery and patriotism. He cannot say no to her. He agrees. On the other hand Pratap is informed that the enemy has come to know about his whereabouts and he therefore should seek a new place for himself.

Sixth act—Akbar receives the news that Pratapsingh would himself come and serve under him. He cannot believe it because he knows the bravery and the firmness of Pratapsingh. Prithviraj, a court poet of Akbar and a friend of Pratap, says that this rumour is totally false. Akbar asks him to inquire about it and himself goes to the harem where the queen tells him that Prithviraj's sister wants to marry Amarsingh but Pratap would not allow this marriage. The king tells her that he has introduced inter caste marriages only to weaken his enemies. The queen is happy to hear this.

Seventh act—Faced with a plethora of difficulties Pratap loses his balance for a while. He tells his minister about this mental uneasiness. Just at this fateful moment he receives a letter from Prithviraj saying that if the rumour of Pratap's surrender to Akbar is true then he would prefer death to humiliation. He also writes that he has told Akbar that Pratap would never yield. Now he should try to uphold his word, otherwise he (Prithviraj) has no other alternative but to end his life. This letter leaves a lasting impression on Pratapsingh's mind. He rises above his momentary weakness and renews his pledge to drive away the enemies from his country. On the other hand Nishadapati informs him that he has given a crushing defeat to the enemy but at the same time the enemy has come to know about their camp and that they shall have to change the place once again.

The princess (the sister of Prithviraj) is suffering the pangs of separation from prince Amarsingh. Amarsingh is also sorry for her but he is help-

less because the prestige of his family stands in the way of the fulfilment of his desire.

Eighth act—A touching scene of the family of Pratapsingh. The young prince asks his mother that they should go back to their home. He is fed up with the hills. Both Pratapsingh and the queen are very sorry to hear the innocent words of their son. Rana Pratap once again prepares for fight with all his might and with the help of his friends and well-wishers he wins.

Ninth act—At last Rana Pratapsingh is again in his capital and all rejoice at his victory. All the sages assemble there and bless Rana Pratapsingh. Pratapsingh utters the Bharatavākya and with this the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Maharana Pratap,—the hero of *Pratāpavijayam*, is Dhīrodātta. The writer himself says that he has put in the character of Pratapsingh all the qualities of a Dhīrodātta hero. This scion of the solar race is justly proud of his lineage. He comes of the family of Ikṣvāku before the scions of which even such powerful celebrities as Indra and Rāvaṇa paled into insignificance :

क्षत्रवीर, इक्ष्वाकुवंशस्य पुरतः का गणना त्रिदिवेशस्य वा दशाननस्य वा । पुरा महोक्ष-
रूपवरस्य महेन्द्रस्य ककुत्स्थारूढेन ककुत्स्थेन पराभूय दानवदलं समर्पितस्तस्मै त्रिविष्टपाधिकारः ।
तथैव स्वयंभुवरदर्पितो दशाननो रघुकुलतिलकेन रामचन्द्रेणैव समरमूर्ध्नि निहतः । तत्कुमारेण
वृथात्मायासपदं न नेयः ।¹

"O brave warrior where does Indra or Rāvaṇa stand before the race of Ikṣvāku ? Formerly it was Kakutstha who having mounted the hump of Indra who had assumed the form of a mighty bull, had defeated the army of the demons and entrusted to Indra the control of heaven. In the same way Rāvaṇa, conceited at the (Śiva's) boon was killed at the head of a battle by Rāmacandra himself who was the forehead mark of the Raghu's race. So the Prince should not needlessly bother himself,"

Rana Pratap is one of the bravest warriors of India. Daring and reckless he works havoc wherever he goes. His very physical appearance radiates bravery. Mounted on a horse with a spear in hand he moves about the battlefield making a short shrift of his enemies. His fierce and red eyes strike terror in the hearts of his enemies :

1. First act, p. 10.

प्रचण्डकोपानललोहिताक्षः स्फुरद्भुजाप्रोद्धतभीमकुन्तः ।

तुरंगसारप्लुतकम्पसंक्रमं रणाङ्गणं धावति कूटकान्तकः ॥¹

"He, the eliminator of the wile, runs about in the battlefield. His eyes are red on account of the fire of terrible anger. He is carrying a terrible spear on his throbbing forearm. His feet go up and down due to the jumps of his best horse."

He is bravery personified :

सहस्रकिरणद्युतिर्ज्वलनचण्डदृष्टिः स्वयं

गिरीन्द्रसदृशच्छवी रिपुदलाभ्रमालाशनिः ।

धरापतिरयम्².....

"This king has his lustre like that of the sun; his eyes are as fierce as the fire; his complexion is like the mount Himālaya; he is the thunderbolt for the thick clouds of the hordes of enemies."

He is forthright in his utterances. He candidly refuses to join Mansingh in meals :

कुमार सर्वदा सन्ति सज्जातिथेया हि सूर्यवंशप्रभवाः किन्तु समानान्वयाधिकारसहभाजमेव संभवति सहभोजनम् ।³

"Prince, we of the solar race are always ready to serve our guests, but the meals together can be taken by the persons of equal rank and of equal family status only."

He has firmly pledged the independence of his country. This is his firm decision. Nothing can make him change it :

प्राप्नोतु राष्ट्रं त्वचिराद्विनाशं

कुलं समग्रं लयमेतु सद्यः ।

सहस्रघाशु प्रविदीर्यतां वपुः

स्वातन्त्र्यमेकं शरणं परं मे ॥⁴

"Let the whole nation perish before long ; let the whole family come to naught quickly and let the body be cut into thousand pieces; the only refuge for me is independence."

Maharana Pratapsingh's liberality, his love for freedom, his capacity to endure hardships—all have won for him a niche in the temple of glory.

1. Second act, p. 27.

2. First act, p. 4.

3. First act, p. 16.

4. First act, p. 17.

To love independence is in the very blood of the high born Kṣatriyas. They learn to fight from their very childhood. There is nothing special in it. But to have courage in adversity and not to lose heart even when the odds are against is something rare. It was only this quality which made Pratap immortal. He is always solicitous of the safety and the welfare of his subjects. When the Moghul army approaches he has the following announcement broadcast :

उद्धोष्यतामस्मद्वचनात्पुरग्रामनदीतीरव्रजादिषु यदात्मरक्षार्थं सर्वैः पौरजानपदैः स वरं शैलप्रदेश आश्रयणीयः । न चैवमुज्झिते प्रदेशे केनापि कृष्यादिकमनुष्ठेयम् । एतद्राजशासनातिक्रमरो त्वपरिहार्या देहान्तदण्डार्हता कृतागस इति । ¹

"Announce it by my order that every one living in the towns, the banks of rivers and the animal enclosures should better take shelter in the mountains. No one should cultivate the abandoned land. The offender who violates this order of the king will have to pay by his life."

Another quality of Pratapsingh which deserves special mention is his modesty. When he manages to win back the fort of Mewar after enduring many hardships he is not arrogant. In characteristic humility he attributes victory to the unstinted cooperation and the unflinching loyalty of his subjects :

यत्सत्यं प्रकृत्यनुरागायत्ता हि राष्ट्रसंपदः । तत्प्रियसामन्तवर्षाणां पौरजानपदाटविकानां चाप्रतिमराजनिष्ठया प्रोत्साहितः तैरेव सानुरागं मेवाडराज्येऽभिषिक्तः प्रभवत्ययं प्रतापो मेवाडस्वातन्त्र्यं परिरक्षितुम् । ²

"In reality the prosperity of a nation depends upon its people. So this Pratap being encouraged by the matchless loyalty of his loving nobles and the citizens, countryfolk and the forestdwellers and crowned by these very people as the king of Mewar is capable of safeguarding its (Mewar's) independence".

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

A great writer of the Twentieth Century Mulshanker Maneklal Yajnik has written three plays all of which are historical ones. A considerable study of the history of the heroes of his plays preceded the author's composition of his works. He had an earnest desire to be as faithful as possible to the incidents connected with their life.

1. Fourth act, p. 54.

2. Fourth act, p. 105

This eagerness of his to be faithful to history also has its parallel in his eagerness to be as faithful to the rules of dramaturgy as possible.

His plays answer well to the description of a play as found in such works of rhetorics as the *Sāhityadarpaṇa*. In his gloss the author takes pains to point out the various *Sandhis* and the *Sandhyaṅgas*, the various *Rasas*, their *Vibhāvas*, *Anubhāvas* and *Sañcāribhāvas* thereby showing that in writing his play he had the rules of dramaturgy always before him and that he was always at pains to mould his plays on the traditional pattern. The reader cannot help bearing the impression that the author was deliberately contriving to make his plays models of perfect writing. His effort that each and everything prescribed for a play by the ancient authorities must be there in his plays too makes his plays only as models.

But this meticulously careful regard for the tradition has done not the least harm to the plays. We can only say that there is no break from tradition, no originality, no innovation in technique. But then it is no crime. Judged by the overall effect produced, the plays of M.M. Yajnik should come out most prominently in the entire range of modern Sanskrit writings. The author's language and expression have a classical ring about them—a no mean achievement by all standards. He is one of about half a dozen twentieth century Sanskritists who have a thorough command of the language which makes a refreshingly delightful reading.

The author divides his plays into acts, each one of which has a separate heading which provides us with an indication of what is to come. Thus he designates the seven acts of *Samyogitāsvayaṃvaram* as : *Rājasūyopākrama*, *Vasantotsava*, *Cārasamprāpti*, *Pracchannasañcāra*, *Priyasamāgama*, *Samyogitāharaṇa*, *Vivāhotsava*; the ten acts of *Chatrapatisāmrājyam* as : *Sāmrājyopākrama*, *Nidhisamprāpti*, *Rājyavyavasthiti*, *Dūṭabhedha*, *Ātmasamarpaṇa*, *Chalaprabandha*, *Mogaleśānusandhāna*, *Prayānaprabandha*, *Durgavijaya*, *Sāmrājyābhiṣeka*; the nine acts of *Pratāpavijayam* as : *Mānasiphāpamāna*, *Haldīghāṭasamgrāma*, *Mevārākramaṇa*, *Śailadurgāśraya*, *Śailavihāra*, *Sārva-bhaumamānāvakhaṇḍana*, *Mṛṣāvādaparihāra*, *Vijayaprayāṇa*, *Vijayamahotsava*.

The plays have a number of verses which describe battles, wars, and the individual bravery of the heroes, and the heroines. We reproduce below a few of them:

In *Chatrapatisāmrājyam* Shivaji is said to be the very God of death for his enemies. He strikes terror wherever he goes:

प्रजवतुरगकल्पितासनोऽयं
 कवचधरः करवालकुन्तनद्वः ।
 अरुणितनयनो रुषा महोग्रः
 सरभसमेत्यभितो द्विषां कृतान्तः ॥¹

At another place in the same play the playwright gives a verse where one of Shivaji's faithful followers Netaji takes a solemn pledge to capture the enemy alive:

कामक्रोधातिरेकव्यसनविदलितं दुर्विनीतं मदान्धं
 त्वत्कोपाग्निप्रदग्धं परिणतविभवं चायुषोऽन्तं गतं तम् ।
 हत्वा निःशेषतस्तद्बलमतिविपुलं तर्पयित्वा कृपाणं
 जीवग्राहं गृहीत्वा निगडितचरणं तेऽन्तिकं प्रापयामि ॥²

In Samyogitāsvayamvaram we meet with a description of a brave Rajput woman plunging herself into the battlefield bringing death and destruction everywhere:

आकृष्टभीषणकृपाणकरालपाणि-
 शिछन्नोत्तमाङ्गरिपुसैन्यकवन्धकीर्णम् ।
 तूर्णं विधाय समराङ्गणमेव चण्डी
 चण्डप्रकोपहुतभुग्ज्वलिता विरेजे ॥³

"The fierce lady with her hand striking terror on account of carrying a terrible sword which she pulled out quickly made the battlefield bestrewn with the trunks of the enemy's beheaded soldiers. There she shone burning with the fire of terrible anger."

The same play also has a verse where the havoc wrought by Jayamalla in the battlefield is described in words which are graphic enough to recreate the very scene before us :

सरम्भस्फुरितारुणाधररुचिः शौर्यातिरेकोत्कटो
 विद्युत्पात इवापतन् रिपुदले स्फूर्जत्कृपाणप्रभः ।
 विच्छिन्नाङ्घ्रिभुजोत्तमाङ्गविकटां नृत्यत्कवन्धाकुलां
 कृत्वासृक्स्त्रवणप्लुतां रणभुवं रेजे द्विषामन्तकः ॥⁴

"He, the destroyer of the enemies, with his slightly red lower lip quiver-

1. Fourth act, p. 59. (Ch. S.)
2. Fourth act, p. 50 (Ch. S.)
3. Third act, p. 43 (P. V.)
4. Third act, p. 43-44 (P. V.)

ing on account of anger, awe-inspiring on account of excessive bravery, falling like lightning on the hordes of his enemies with his shimmering sword shone having made the battlefield filled with the flowing blood, replete with the dancing headless trunks as also looking terrible on account of the chopped off feet, arms and heads."

The heroic being the predominant sentiment of the plays there was little scope for humour in them. There is only a sprinkling of it in the author's earliest of the plays i.e. *Samyogitāsvayamvaram*. There too it is only the *Vidūṣaka* who contributes to it but his appearance there is the briefest ever and does not lead to much amusement and entertainment.

Even in the midst of the battles and the wars or romances the author takes a pause to have a closer look at nature which he describes in all its various moods. As examples we quote the following few verses :

नवकिसलयरागारञ्जितोऽयं रसालो
हरति मदकलानां कोकिलानां मनांसि ।
वकुलमलिकुलानां गुञ्जितेनाकुलं तन्
मृदुलसुरभिगन्धिं गन्धवाहं करोति ॥¹

"This mango tree reddened allround by the red colour of fresh sprouts, charms the minds of intoxicated cuckoos cooing indistinctly. The *Bakula* tree full of humming swarms of bees makes the wind soft and fragrant."

एतद्विरूढतरुणुल्लसतावितान-
मुत्सङ्गवर्ति गहनं गहनान्तरालम् ।
प्रच्छन्नसत्त्वमभितः पवनावधूत-
मुल्लोलवीचिजलधेः समतां विधत्ते ॥²

"This deep forest, situated on the sides of this hill, overgrown with trees, shrubs and with bowers of creepers, with living beings concealed in its interior, and moved by the wind, appears like an ocean with high waves."

कुसुमितद्रुमराजिसमावृता सुरभिगन्धवहैरधिवासिता ।
अनियतालिविहारहिताऽऽयता हरति कस्य मनो न नगस्थली ।³

"This expansive mountain-region is (verily worth enjoying for this is) surrounded by rows of flowery trees; is perfumed with the fragrant breezes;

1. Second act, p. 18. (S. S.)
2. Fourth act, p. 59 (Ch S.)
3. Fifth act, p. 64 (P. V.)

is good for the fitful movement of the bees. Whose mind does it not captivate ?”

The author quite often gives expression to some fundamental truth in pithy expressions which can easily pass into good proverbs and sayings :

- (क) अनुल्लङ्घनीयो गुरोर्निदेशः ।¹
- (ख) भद्रारम्भाण्येव श्रेयांसि ।²
- (ग) सर्वोप्यात्मानमेव बहु मन्यते ।³
- (घ) मातुर्गुणा हि तनयाऽनुगता भवन्ति ।⁴
- (ङ) संकल्पमात्राधीना हि सतामभिमतार्थसिद्धयः ।⁵
- (च) सख्यू रिपोर्वापि मनोगतं यतः स्वयं स्फुरत्येव निजान्तरात्मनि ।⁶
- (छ) साहस एव श्रीः प्रतिष्ठिता ।⁷
- (ज) सर्वत्र धैर्यमूलान्येव भद्राणि ।⁸
- (झ) सर्वत्रात्मनाश एवाधमशुश्रूषायाः फलम् ।⁹
- (ञ) यत्र ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च समीची चरतस्तत्रैव साम्राज्यश्रीविलसति ।¹⁰
- (ट) सर्वत्र ब्रह्मैधितमेव क्षत्रं समृध्यते ।¹¹
- (ठ) पुण्यवतामेव खलु महत्सपर्याप्तौभाग्यम् ।¹²
- (ड) कर्तव्यनिष्ठाया अविच्युतानां भवन्ति सर्वेऽपि परिणामसुखोदया उपक्रमाः ।¹³
- (ढ) अनेकवीरव्ययसाध्या हि साम्राज्यसिद्धिः ।¹⁴
- (ण) प्रकृत्यनुरागायत्ता हि राज्ञां त्रिसाधनाशक्तिसंपदः ।¹⁵
- (त) रत्नानामिव पुरुषाणामप्यस्ति मूल्यपरिमाणम् ।¹⁶

1. Second act, p. 31. (S. S.)
2. Third act, p. 34. (S. S.)
3. Fourth act, p. 61. (S. S.)
4. Fourth act, p. 64. (S. S.)
5. Seventh act, p. 89. (S. S.)
6. Seventh act, p. 93 (S. S.)
7. First act, p. 8. (Ch. S.)
8. Second act, p. 26. (Ch. S.)
9. Third act, p. 37. (Ch. S.)
10. Fourth act, p. 47. (Ch. S.)
11. Fourth act, p. 53. (Ch. S.)
12. Sixth act, p. 70. (Ch. S.)
13. Seventh act, p. 78. (Ch. S.)
14. Tenth act, p. 108 (Ch. S.)
15. Third act, p. 39 (P. V.)
16. Third act, p. 40 (P. V.)

- (थ) यशोमात्रविभवा हि लोकपालाः ।¹
 (द) पौरजनानुरागायत्ता हि राष्ट्रसंपदः ।²
 (घ) किं नाम भाव्यर्थसूचकत्वमङ्गविकाराणाम् ।³
 (न) सर्वत्राल्पीयसामेव विघातः ।⁴

The language is fairly alliterative at places. A few choice examples are given below :

- (क) मन्त्रं मन्त्रयते कमप्यभिनवं मन्त्रिद्वितीयः पुनः ।⁵
 (ख) नात्र विहिताविहितशङ्कावसरः ।⁶
 (ग) मृदुलसुरभिर्गन्धि गन्धवाहं करोति ।⁷
 (घ) मुग्धालीकरतालपालितलया नृत्यन्ति लीलालसम् ।⁸
 (ङ) तरङ्गभङ्गाकुलमानसाया न मे प्रिया जह्नुसुतातरङ्गाः ।⁹
 (च) तपनांशुतपनशमनोऽनिलशमनश्चपलश्चञ्चलोल्लसितमेघः ।¹⁰
 (छ) विद्वेषतः श्रेयः उपाश्रयेम ।¹¹
 (ज) प्रजाः प्रजाः स्वा इव शास्त्यधीशः ।¹²
 (झ) चायुषोऽन्तं गतं तम् ।¹³
 (ञ) व्यनक्ति विच्छाद्यमुखच्छविः स्वयम् ।¹⁴
 (ट) पाप्मनां प्रमथने प्रकल्पितः ।¹⁵
 (ठ) नानाप्रहारपटुवीरभटोत्कटोऽयम् ।¹⁶
 (ड) उल्लोलवीचिक्षुभिता तरङ्गिणी समीरवेगेन समेति सागरम् ।¹⁷

1. Third act, p. 44 (P. V.)
2. Fourth act, P. 60 (P. V.)
3. Fifth act, p. 64 (P. V.)
4. Sixth act p. 74 (P. V.)
5. First act, p. 5. (S. S.)
6. First act. p. 7. (S. S.)
7. Second act, p. 18 (S. S.)
8. Second act, p. 22. (S. S.)
9. Fifth act, p. 67. (S. S.)
10. First act, p. 3. (Ch. S.)
11. First act, p. 11. (Ch. S.)
12. Third act, p. 38. (Ch. S.)
13. Fourth act, P. 50. (Ch. S.)
14. Fourth act, p. 52. (Ch. S.)
15. Fourth act, p. 46. (Ch. S.)
16. Fourth act, p. 55. (P.V.)
17. Fifth act, p. 62. (P.V.)

(ड) षाड्गुण्यप्रमुखप्रयोगमथितप्रत्यथिसंघाकुलम् ।¹

(ढ) अर्थार्थिनामभिमतार्थफलप्रसिद्ध्यै ।²

In his language the author is conscious of the importance of symmetry too. A chain of similar verbal forms occurring in quick succession makes a very delightful reading :

गर्जति वर्षति विकिरति वनचरनिकरान् प्रसादयति लोकम् ।³

It is the same regard for symmetry which prompts our author to induce one in each of his three lines (*Act I, verse 25*), the following three expressions:

सम्प्रयुञ्जन्, प्रीणयन्, रञ्जयन् ।⁴

The language, except for lone नियुज्मि⁵ is free from any serious grammatical lapses .

The author is wellversed in the science of polity. In a number of places in his work he exhibits this knowledge of his . How aptly does he describe through the mouth of the minister of Rana Pratap the fourfold policy of *sāma*, *dāna*, *daṇḍa* and *bheda*, and the type of kings against whom each one of these is to be employed :

सामोपचारैर्नृपतिं समप्रभं

दानेन हीनं कुलधर्मनिष्ठम् ।

सत्त्वाधिकं भेदनयेन चोद्धतं

दण्डेन भिन्नप्रकृतिं वशं नयेत् ॥⁶

Not only in works on Polity, he is well-versed in other works too. Unconsciously he would permit himself such expressions as would show the presence in his subconscious mind of the lines or words from some of the well-known older works. Thus when he says—

विपद्विपत्तिं पुनरेव संपदं

संपत्सदैवानुगता हि दृश्यते ।⁷

we can at once recognize that he has at the back of his mind the famous line विपद् विपदमनुवन्नाति संपद् संपदमिति ।

1. Fifth act, p. 67. (P.V.)

2. Eighth act, p. 99. (P.V.)

3. First act, p. 3. (Ch. S.)

4. First act, p. 15. (Ch. S.)

5. Third act, p. 34. (Ch. S.)

6. Fourth act p. 50. (P.V.)

7. Third act, p. 39. (S.S.)

Again, while reading the line भारतवर्षे दुष्कृतां हिंसनं साधूनां च परित्राणमेव क्षत्रियस्य परो धर्मः ।¹ we cannot help being reminded of the famous Gītā line परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्. Further यत्र ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च समीची (चरतः)² is nothing but the Upaniṣadic line in almost identical words. Again in तेजोद्वयस्य युगपत्सुपमाम्³ the influence of the Kālidāsan line तेजोद्वयस्य युगपद्व्यसनोदयाम्याम् cannot go unnoticed. The first part तेजोद्वयस्य युगपत् is common to both of these.

The author embellishes his works with a number of figures of speech like Upamā,⁴ Viṣama,⁵ Arthāntaranyāsa,⁶ Dr̥ṣṭānta,⁷ Nidarśanā,⁸ Apahnuti.⁹

The author gives a number of songs in his plays which are characterized by excessive alliteration and carry an indication of the *rāga* and the *tāla* in which they are to be sung. The detailed notes of the *rāga* are provided at the end of the works. These songs, racy and crisp, have their own contribution to make to the beauty and the charm of the plays. We would like to conclude our critique of the plays with the part reproduction here of a few of the songs:

(१) (गौण्डमल्लार राग, त्रिताल)

क्व नु मम विहरसि मानसहंस
घन इव सततं वर्षति नयनम् ।
स्फुटयति तडिदिव रतिरिह हृदयम् ।
तिरयति तिमिरं तव पन्थानम्
अयि कुरु मरुतं प्रिय तव यानम् ।
विरहविलुलितां परमाकुलिताम् ।
प्रियमुखनिरतामव तव दयिताम् ॥¹⁰

(२) वितरति नतिमयि रतिरमण
युवतिजनस्ते रतिरमण ॥

1. Fourth act, p. 45 (Ch. S.)
2. Fourth act, p. 47. (Ch. S.)
3. Third act, p. 41. (Ch. S.)
4. Third act, Verse 6 (S.S.), Fourth act, verse 20 (Ch. S.), Fourth act, verse 1. (P.V.)
5. Seventh act, verse 2. (S.S.), Eighth act, verse 5. (Ch.S.)
6. Third act, verse 8 (S.S.), First act, verse 12 (Ch. S.), Fourth act, verse 8 (P.V.)
7. Fourth act, verse 4 (S.S.), First act, verse 14 (Ch. S.), Seventh act, verse 5 (P.V.)
8. Third act, verse 7 (S.S.), Third act, verse 15 (Ch. S.), Ninth act, verse 3 (P.V.)
9. Second act, verse 9, (Ch. S.)
10. Fifth act, verse 1—2—3, p. 66. (S.S.)

नवकुसुमसायक वसन्तनायक
 अलिकुलगायक रतिरमण ॥ वितरति० ॥
 वनिताशरण रसिकविधरण
 भवसंतरण रतिरमण ॥ वितरति० ॥
 सुरगणवन्दित निजरतिनन्दित
 स्तवनानन्दित रतिरमण ॥ वितरति० ॥
 वाञ्छितमर्पय मनांसि तर्पय
 स्वजनं दर्पय रतिरमण ॥ वितरति० ॥¹

- (३) (मल्लाररागेण त्रितालेन गीयते)
 रसमति रसयति रसा विशाला
 विवलति चपलपयोधरमाला ।
 भवति सपदि जनतापविलयनम्
 मृग्यति मृगपतिरूपरिनिलयनम् ॥²
 + + +

- (४) (कण्टिरागेण त्रितालेन गीयते)
 तारय तव सुतमम्भ भवानि
 प्रबलयवनरिपुगलितविभावम्
 प्रलयपयोनिधिविलुलितनावम्
 पालय परममृडानि ॥³

- (५) (भूपालीरागेण दादरातालेन गीयते)
 भट्टा नदताट्टमेव — हर हर हर महादेव
 प्रकटयत कटप्रतापमरिकुलघटितोपतापहृष्टा नदताट्टमेव०⁴

- (६) (विहाररागेण तेवरातालेन गीयते)
 सुमसुकुमार नयनविहार
 हृदयाधार यौवनसार
 प्रणयपार पारावार⁵
 + + +

1. Second act, p. 25 (S.S.)
 2. First act, p. 3 (Ch.S.)
 3. Second act, p. 23 (Ch.S.)
 4. Fourth act, p. 61 (Ch.S.)
 5. Seventh act, p. 84 (Ch.S.)

Humorous Plays

Śṛṅgāranāradyam

INTRODUCTORY

The Śṛṅgāranāradyam is a farce of 21 pages written by Y. Mahalinga Sastri. The author himself published it in 1956. It is based on the Paurāṇic story of the change of sex of Nārada. We have it in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa that Nārada was transformed into a woman. He led married life first in the form of a man and later as a woman. The story appeared in the Amṛtavāṇī Patrikā in 1944 by Daksina Murti who retold it in prose. Y. Mahalinga Sastri has based his farce on that story making such changes and alterations in it as served his purpose.

PLOT

Nāndī over, the stage manager enters the stage. The Vidūṣaka has a newspaper in hand. The stage manager is astonished to see the Vidūṣaka in a woman's attire and in a jolly mood. He asks him as to why he has put on a woman's dress. The Vidūṣaka answers that it is not unusual to put on a woman's dress in a drama. But the stage manager thinks it improper. The Vidūṣaka replies that there is nothing improper in putting on woman's clothes. He speaks of a recent news item appearing in the papers that a charming lady has changed her sex and has become a man. After this they busy themselves with the production of the play Śṛṅgāranāradyam by Y. Mahalinga Sastri. This forms the prologue to the play.

After the prologue a Gandharva couple is shown engaged in love sports. The Gandharva youth tries to please his consort by praising her beauty and charm but the arrogant lady is not to be reconciled easily and goes away. The Gandharva youth searches for her here and there but in vain. After a while it occurs to him suddenly that she might have gone to the cave adjacent to the pond called Kanda, which used to be their former meeting place. He goes there and brings round his wife and unites himself sexually with her. On the other side Nārada descends from heaven and seeing a beautiful pond wants to play on his Vīṇā there. When he finds that due to excessive heat it is inconvenient to do so in the open he enters the cave but is very much upset to see the sexual play of the Gandharva couple.

Before he begins playing on the Vīṇā and has rest he happens to see this. He considers it a bad omen. On the other hand he thinks that just as their sexual union was a bad omen for him similarly he too had committed wrong by causing an obstruction to their playful activities.

He wants to atone for this. He wants to wash his sin (of causing obstruction) by having a dip in the pond. He puts off his clothes, places the Vīṇā on the bank and plunges into the pond. At this Rkṣarajas enters the stage. He knows that any man having a bath in the pond would be converted into a woman and would live as his wife. Rkṣarajas displays his passion for Nārada who he thinks has by now become a woman and invites her for sexual union by playing on the Vīṇā. Nārada does not believe in what he says. He gives him a bit of his mind and tells him that he is Nārada and not some woman. Rkṣarajas then tells him that he would definitely have his sex changed. As a proof he cites his own experience of having become a woman when he had a bath in the pond earlier. Meanwhile Nārada himself begins to feel that he has come to have feminine limbs. Rkṣarajaṣ invites him for sexual union but Nārada proves too clever for him. He asks Rkṣarajas to go to the pond and bring for 'her' a beautiful lotus. Burning with passion Rkṣarajas enters the pond only to come out as a woman. Radanā (the name of Nārada in the feminine form) taunts lady Rkṣarajas that she may not be desirous of enjoying her, now that she has herself become a woman. She can act only as the lady messenger for her (Radanā) now. Rkṣarajas is very sorry at his indiscretion and haste which led to this discomfiture of his. Even Nārada feels sorry for him but even as a woman he thinks of nobody else except Nārāyaṇa. Radanā sings in praise of the Lord to the accompaniment of the sweet notes of the Vīṇā. Hearing Radanā's call Nārāyaṇa Himself appears there. Radanā describes before Him her sad condition. Nārāyaṇa consoles her by saying that she would live as his wife and would have sixty sons. He further says that it is not impossible to have the masculine form converted into the feminine one. He Himself had to undergo this experience, says He. To punish the demons He had assumed the form of a charming girl (Mohinī). Maheśvara was her husband at that time. After this Nārāyaṇa enquires about Rkṣarajas. Radanā says that Rkṣarajas, now turned into a woman, is sitting in the cave feeling ashamed. The Lord wants to have a look at her and assures her that she would regain her masculine form. Radanā jocularly remarks that after she would do so (regain her masculine form) she would kidnap her.

Meanwhile Rkṣarajas herself appears before the Lord who tells her that it is for her that He has come from Vaikuṇṭha. If she wants to attain her masculine form she can at once attain it but Rkṣarajas wants to remain in her feminine form. Nārāyaṇa is happy to find beautiful Radanā as his wife. The Prahāsana ends with the utterance of the Bharatavākya by Nārāyaṇa.

CHARACTERIZATION

Nārada—He is depicted in the play as a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa. He is powerless before destiny on account of which he has to assume the feminine form. On his part Rkṣarajas is highly devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa but has a weakness for woman. He too had to assume the feminine form on account of his own folly. All the characters in the play are Paurāṇic ones and are too well known to deserve any special mention. The playwright has not deemed it fit to make any notable departure from their characterization as it is available in the Purāṇas. One thing which strikes us most while we go through the play is that all the characters are shown to be mere playthings in the hands of the Lord. That is why Radanā, Nārada in the feminine form, says :

सुष्ठु भोः यन्नारदत्वे समीहितं तद्रदनात्वे मुरारिभजनं पूरयिष्यते । अथवा स्त्री खलु वीणया गायन्ती शोभते इति भगवतः संकल्पस्येदं पारतन्त्र्यम् ।¹

"Well, the singing in praise of the Lord which I desired in my form as Nārada will now be fulfilled in my form of Radanā. Or this may well be the desire of the Lord who thinks that a woman singing with Vīṇā looks charming."

Kauṇḍinyaprahasanam

INTRODUCTORY

The Kauṇḍinyaprahasanam is a farce in seventeen pages by Y. Mahalinga Sastri and is published by the author himself in the year 1930. The play represents "appetite as the root cause of the friction between the two classes of men—the owner and the trespasser. Appetite, metaphorically, stands for all the indomitable animal cravings in man". The incident of this Prahasana, is rather trivial, but it is conceived symbolically.

The Prahasana is a reprint from the Udyāna Patrikā.

PLOT

First act—Gṛdhranāsa and his wife Jihmalā are shown busy preparing delicious food after the Ekādaśī fast. Jihmalā says that as the maid servant is not feeling well Gṛdhranāsa should himself run to the market and bring quickly some items which are needed to prepare the dishes. Gṛdhranāsa goes to the market but before doing so instructs his wife to beware of Kauṇḍinya, a greedy Brahmin, who is always after others' delicious food.

Second act—In spite of all the secrecy maintained Kauṇḍinya comes to know that Gṛdhranāsa and Jihmalā are planning to prepare delicious meals. So he wants to avail himself of the ideal opportunity. He knows that Gṛdhranāsa has gone to the market to buy a few things. So he waits for him by standing at the front door of his house thinking that as soon as Gṛdhranāsa enters he would also follow him. When Gṛdhranāsa returns he senses that Kauṇḍinya is standing at his front door. So he quietly enters his house through the back door. But Kauṇḍinya is too clever to be dodged like this. When he hears Gṛdhranāsa talking to Jihmalā he comes to know that Gṛdhranāsa has entered his house. He also goes in through the back door. Gṛdhranāsa and Jihmalā see him coming through the back door. Terrified Gṛdhranāsa gulps down even the piping hot food. A little bit of delay, he knows, would cost him a big share of it. But the hot food causes him trouble and in agony he sends out cries. Jihmalā covers his mouth with the corner of her saree and sobbing tells Kauṇḍinya that her husband has developed a rash on the cheek. She requests him to go out and

bring the Vaidya with him. Kaundinya knows that all this is a ruse to put him off. So he goes out of the room but hides himself behind the heap of chaff on the outer door of the house. Jihmalā does not believe that Kaundinya has gone to bring the Vaidya. She thinks that he is hiding himself behind the doors. She loudly narrates to her husband the story of a Brahmarākṣasa which the neighbours had told her the day before. According to the neighbours a Brahmarākṣasa had entered their house and they had to drag him out because he loved to partake of others' meals. She has the feeling, she says, that that very Brahmarākṣasa has now entered their house. Ṛdhranāsa says that he would drag him out by beating him with a stick. Kaundinya is listening to all this. So when Ṛdhranāsa comes out to attack him he picks up a handful of chaff and throws it into his eyes. Ṛdhranāsa is unable to see anything and cries in pain. His wife hurriedly looks after him. This provides Kaundinya with the ideal opportunity. He enters the house and helps himself with the delicious food. Jihmalā angry at the wicked deed of Kaundinya condemns him.

With her condemnations the Prahāsana comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Ṛdhranāsa—Ṛdhranāsa is one of the two characters of the play who deserve special mention. He has a liking for delicious food, but on account of miserliness, is not happy to share it with his so called friend Kaundinya who takes delight in helping himself with others' food. Ṛdhranāsa is a henpecked husband. He follows each and every word of what his wife says. He looks up to her even for the smallest things. He is not given to independent thinking. All of his activities are guided by his wife, a fact which not unoften lands him in trouble. At times he is humorous too as may be seen from the following words wherein he says that for the man with the palate it is a question of prestige to choose a dish among the many just as it is a question of honour for a noble hero to select from among his many wives any single one for enjoyment. Ṛdhranāsa's whole life revolves round two things food and woman. These are uppermost in his mind and it is on account of this that his similes on occasions, are derived from them. A peculiarly delightful illustration is quoted below :

अथवा मरीचचिपिटी विश्राम्यतु किं प्रजल्पितं नु मया ।

मिथ्यारोषस्फुरितत्वदधरमृदुता कुतो वराकस्य ॥¹

1. First act, p. 3.

"Or leave these *cipīṭas* with chillies alone. What did I say ? How can the poor thing have the softness of your lips quivering on account of false anger."

Kaunḍinya—He represents a character who is greedy of others' food. Though avoided he would manage to sneak in and help himself with the food prepared by others. The following lines are typical of his love for others' food :

चिन्ता नास्ति किल-तेषां-चिन्ता नास्ति किल ।
परगृहभोजनपरितुष्टानां नित्यातिथ्योत्सव-निष्ठानाम् ।
कालत्रयविरतोद्योगानां किं च समेतामितभोगानाम् ।
गृहमेधिनिमन्त्रणचित्तानां षड्रसभरिताशनमत्तानाम् ॥¹

"There is no worry for those who are satisfied by taking meals at others' homes, who are always given to the festivities connected with guest-hood, who refrain from doing anything in all the three times (past, present and future), who have countless things of enjoyment gathered with them, whose minds are always focussed on the invitations from the householders and who are exhilarated at the meals full of the six Rasas."

To serve his own purpose he always quotes such old sayings as may encourage people to serve food to the Brāhmaṇas. The following verse is his favourite :

अग्निदेवपितृणां हि ब्राह्मणा मुल्लमिष्यते ।
एकः स्वादु न भुञ्जीतेत्येवं गाथा च लौकिकी ॥²

"Brāhmaṇas are considered to be the mouth of fire, deities and manes. There is also an old saying which says that one should not take delicious food alone."

He is prepared to suffer any amount of humiliation and insults but not curb the animal instinct of helping himself with others' food. He thinks that these insults are the part of the life of receptive people like him:

द्वारं क्वचित्क्वापि गृहस्य भित्तिः
क्वाप्यर्धचन्द्रः क्वचिदुग्रवाचः ।
परान्नचित्तैः कृपणोपरोधा
उल्लङ्घनीया हि भवन्ति नित्यम् ॥³

"Somewhere one is pushed out of the door, somewhere one is made to cross the wall of the house, somewhere one is turned out and somewhere one

1. First act, p. 6.

2. Second act, p. 15.

3. P. 7.

is to put up with harsh words. (In this way) the people given to the thoughts of others' food have always to put up with the obstructions placed by the misers."

He is too shrewd for Ḡḍhranāsa and Jihmalā. He outwits them and is ultimately able to achieve his goal of helping himself with the delicious food prepared by Ḡḍhranāsa and Jihmalā for their own self.

Jihmalā—She is a clever woman no doubt but all her plans are foiled by Kaundinya. Like her husband she too is close-fisted and does not like to give anything to others. As a wife however she is devoted and takes particular care of her husband.

Ubhayarūpakam

The Ubhayarūpakam is a farce in 40 pages by Y. Mahalinga Sastri. It took the writer nine years (1929-1938) to complete the work which was first published in the Udyāna Patrikā. Later it was issued in the book form by the author in the year 1962.

✱

PLOT

"The farce opens up with a conversation between Kukkuṭasvāmin and Vajraghoṣa. Chāgala, the son of Kukkuṭasvāmin, has come to his village from Madras where he is studying. Vajraghoṣa, a village-teacher, who has a finger in every pie, wants to know why Chāgala, who generally spends his vacation in Piṅgalapura, has come to the village. Kukkuṭasvāmin informs him inter alia that his son being accustomed to town-life, does not wish to live in the village; still in deference to his desire he had come to spend the winter recess with him. Kukkuṭasvāmin is very proud of his son who has had English education, and expresses his hope that he will go to England (Sitāvani), live on the banks of the Thames for two years and come back and move about majestically, holding some important government job. He does not like his elder son Chandovṛti who lives with him in the village and toils in the fields. Chandovṛti does not like so much love being showered on his younger brother by the father, and so denounces an anglicized person in the presence of Vajraghoṣa. The father leaves the scene in deep dudgeon. After Chandovṛti too leaves the place Chāgala comes in and in the course of a conversation learns from Vajraghoṣa that his father is carrying on negotiations with one Kāryadrṣṭi for the marriage of the latter's daughter Vañcanā with him and that for this purpose the girl is being given lessons in music and English language. Kukkuṭa wants that his son's would-be father-in-law should bear the expenses of his son's foreign education. This disappoints Chāgala as he does not like to be married to a girl he does not like, simply for the sake of the dowry. Then there is an interlude. He is called by the mother to take tea. As he

✱Prof. R. K. Bhat gives the story of the work in his Foreword. We have taken it up from there.

finishes it a post-man delivers him a letter from his Professor Viśvāvasu Śarmā by name, who wants him to join him at the Railway Station and accompany him to Madras for making arrangements for the Inter-Collegiate dramatic recitation competition to be held in the next week. From the Railway Time-table he comes to know that the train reaches the Chāgavaṭa Station at 11.30 A.M. As it is nearing 9 A.M. he hurries up to reach the Station in time. But he discovers that he has not shaven. He says that there is only one barber in the wretched village who moves about from place to place owing to very little business. He then thinks that he should use his own shaving set. He tells his niece Śiñjinī that he will have his bath in the river. He asks her to bring a little water in a bowl. When she delays, he looks round and finds Vṛddhaśākvara, the servant, carrying a pot of water to the manger. He takes from it a little water in a glass tumbler and asks the servant to stay outside the room until he calls him again. He then shaves inside a closed room and puts the shaven hair on a piece of paper. He takes out another piece of paper on which is written the speech of his role in the drama Hamlet and which in hurry he forgets to replace in his box. From Vṛddhaśākvara he learns that both his father and elder brother are away. He then folds the shaven hair into a packet and leaving it at the windowsill asks the old servant to take his trunk and bedding to the Railway Station. After a good deal of hesitation the latter agrees and at the Station Chāgala hands him a letter to be delivered to his father. In the meanwhile the elder brother discovers the "letter" (i.e. the Hamlet Speech) and raises a hue and cry to the effect that Chāgala has gone out to commit suicide. Consternation grips all the persons concerned and a number of people gather in the house. Vajraghoṣa goes to Chāgala's room and discovers therein the packet and presumes that it contains some wet dark powder. Kukkuṭa takes it to be poison. Pippalī, Chāgala's mother, is grief-stricken to note that her son took poison to commit suicide. The village physician Sindūraka is called in to examine the contents of the packet. He declares it to be a strong poison meant for the worst type of leprosy. Chandovṛti however puts the contents of the packet into water and discovers that it is the shaven hair and no poison. At this stage comes hurrying up Vṛddhaśākvara with a letter in hand. That solves the mystery. The servant informs every one present that Chāgala is all right and has left by train for Madras along with his teacher. The letter tells the father that Chāgala is sorry for his sudden departure from the village. He says that he does not like village

life. He makes it clear that he does not want to marry a girl chosen by some one else. On the other hand he would like to marry a girl who is his class-mate and who loves him. Now this is a bolt from the blue to Kukkuṭasvāmin whose entire plan is upset. Vicāradrṣṭi, son of Kāryadrṣṭi, and a collegemate of Chāgala unravels the mystery by explaining that the earlier "letter" contains the monologue of the sad hero in the Shakesperian play, Hamlet and that it is possible that the piece of paper slipped while Chāgala was hurrying up to leave. He further explains that in the original text the name of the heroine is Śephālikā, but Chāgala has put Mañjulā in its place, that this probably betrays his own heart and that persistent rumour that Chāgala goes to Piṅgalapura to spend his vacation because of Mañjulā, who is the niece of Viśvāvasu Śarmā and whose father is an officer in the Military Audit Department at Piṅgalapura. He concludes saying that it is simply due to this that Viśvāvasu does not want Chāgala to stay with his father even for a day. Kukkuṭa is very sad. Vajraghoṣa then advises him to treat his elder son and his wife with kindness and not look down upon them in his pride for a son whose real character he has now understood. Kukkuṭa realises his mistake and is really penitent. The Prahāsana closes at this stage with the Bharatavākya wherein there is a prayer for the cessation of domestic quarrels between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law.

CHARACTERIZATION

Kukkuṭasvāmin—He is a typical man. He hates village life though he himself lives in a village. He does not know even a single word of English but is very proud of his English knowing son. He quotes a very high fee for the marriage of his son. 'Only that man can have his son as his son-in-law who can afford to meet the entire expenses of his studies abroad', says he.

Kukkuṭasvāmin considers his elder son a mere fool though he works hard in the fields and is quite obedient, because he does not know English. He always praises his younger son and looks down upon the elder one. It is only when the younger son totally ignores him that he repents and says :

कुक्कुटस्वामी—वज्रघोष ! अद्य मम हृदयारुन्तुदं मन्त्रयसे । व्रजतु वा आङ्गलदेशं मा वा
मम पुत्रकः । किं मे अनेन इतः परं भविष्यति ? तादृशानां नूतनमनुष्याणां
संबन्धे वृद्धानुमतमन्तरेणैव गान्धर्वविधिना निर्वृत्तो पुत्रस्तन्मयत्वं प्रतिपद्य

पितुरपि प्रत्यभिज्ञायां सावज्ञो जायेत । ते च विरलेष्वपि गमनागमनेषु
ग्रामीणपामरं मां जानन्तः तत्तद्व्यतिकरप्रापितलाघवं शतमुखमुपेक्षेरन् ।
ततश्च पुत्रस्य सौभाग्योन्नतिषु मम का श्लाघा निर्वृतिर्वा स्यात् ।
तदुपसर्पणजातप्रभावस्य कस्यचित्पानीयवाहकस्याप्यवरो गण्यमानः कुत्रचिद्
गृहकोणे तेनैव इतरैश्चावकीर्येयं द्रप्सवत् ।¹

"Vajraghoṣa, today what you tell me pierces my heart. My son may go to England or not. Or what good would he be to me thereafter ? When such modern people contract love marriages without the consent of elders the son being wholly won over by the other side may refuse even to recognize his father, And those (the inlaws of the sons) despite reciprocal visits would be slighting me in one form or the other and ignore me in a hundred ways. Then with the rise of my son's fortune what glory or satisfaction would there be for me ? I shall be considered inferior even to his water-carrier who might have acquired some influence by having an access to him. Sitting in a corner of the house I would be discarded by him and others like a drop of water."

Chāgala—Chāgala, the son of Kukkuṭasvāmin, acts in a way as to totally belie the hopes and aspirations of his father. He hates the village life. The very place where he spent the early days of his childhood has no appeal for him now. He would not like to spend even a day there. This is the result of the western education. It is on account of this that he looks upon agriculture, the mainstay of the people of this country, as something fit for the animals. The following few lines are typical of the supreme contempt that he nourishes in his mind for the village life :

अहो ग्रामवासस्य विनोदोपलम्भकार्पण्यम् । पशुप्रायमत्रत्यानां जीवनम् ।

संस्नापयन्ति महिषान् सपलालहस्ताः

क्षेत्राण्यटन्ति बहुकर्दमदुस्तराणि ।

भुक्त्वा स्वपन्ति कलहान् विदधत्यनन्तान्

लोके स्थितास्थितममी न तु चेतयन्ते ।²

"Oh ! what a paucity of diversions in a country life ! The life of the people of this place is almost like that of animals.

1. p. 39.

2. p. 10.

With straw in their hands they bathe the buffaloes ; they move about the squalory fields ; they sleep and snore after meals; they engage themselves in endless brawls and pay no heed to what is going on in the world."

On being told by Vajraghoṣa that his (Chāgala's) father is arranging his (Chāgala's) marriage with Vañcanā simply because the would-be father-in-law would meet his foreign expenses he (Chāgala) feels totally unhappy and cries unto himself :

छागलः—(स्वगतम्) अहो धिक् ! किं मामेव विक्रीय मन्मार्गव्ययमर्जयिष्यति पिता । अहो
अर्थलुब्धस्यास्य शाठ्यम् । अद्यावधि नावेदयति किञ्चिन्मयि मदालम्बमेव
संकल्पितम् । ऐतिहासिके खलु काले पितुः स्वं पुत्रं आसीदिति शुश्रुम ।¹

"O how sad ! is it that my father will earn my foreign expenses by selling me ? What a wickedness of him who is so greedy of money ! Even now he does not say anything to me as to what he has thought about me. In days of yore it is heard that the son used to be the very self of his father."

Chāgala's mother always picks up a quarrel with her elder daughter-in-law. His father is only after money. This pains Chāgala. The clear picture of his family is before him now. He wants to get away from this suffocating atmosphere and enjoy the happy company of Mañjulā his sweet heart :

अर्थानातुरकातरो मम पिता पुत्रभाण्डेन वाञ्छ-
त्यारादर्जयितुं निधाय पुरतो वञ्चनावञ्चनां मे ।
शम्पापिप्पलि वतंतेऽहिनकुलं छिद्रमन्तर्दुरन्तं
चेतो धावति मञ्जुलां प्रणयिनीं श्लाघते मद्रवासम् ।²

"The miserable and timid father of mine representing his guile to be naivete before me, wants to earn easy money through (the matrimony of) his son. There is constant fight between Śāmpā and Pippalī like the inveterate enmity between a snake and a mongoose. Their differences know no end. But my mind runs towards my beloved Mañjulā. O how I long to live in Madras !"

There is nothing new in the situation described in the above verse. This is typical of the Indian household where the quarrels between the

1. P. 14.

2. P. 21.

mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law are the order of the day and have become proverbial. None of these falls short of saying bitter words to the other. The fault of the disappearance of Chāgala is squarely laid on the shoulders of the daughter-in-law by the unhappy mother-in-law who finds the ready scapegoat in her. That is why Pippalī says to Śāmpā :

पिप्पली—कुतो मे विभवस्तामपाकर्तुम् । तेन ह्यस्मि स्वयमपक्रान्ता । निर्याति च मयि सा
दुर्मर्षणा अभिशङ्गी किं वा दुरचारीत् अपाभाषिष्ट वा ईश्वरो वेद । येनोद्विग्नो
मानी मम वत्सः मृत्युमपि वरममस्त ।¹

"Pippalī—How dare could I ward her off ? So I myself withdrew from the place. When I had withdrawn God knows in what wicked way did that irate and foulmouthed wench behave or what abuses did she hurl at him that my highminded son became so upset that he thought better to end his life."

Some comments on the Ubhaya-rūpakam

The Ubhaya-rūpakam is a satire on the love of westernization in some sections of our society.

The author taunts those who have discarded their own culture but are unable to imitate fully the western way of life; they stand midway, neither Indian nor Western, a hybrid product :

पौर्वं त्यक्तं नैव पाश्चात्यमस्ति
अष्टं स्थानात् प्रापि नाङ्घ्रेनिवेशः ।
केशाः कृत्ताः विस्मृतो विप्रभावः
किञ्चिज्ज्ञातं भूर्यवज्ञातमद्धा ॥²

"We discarded what is of the East but could not adopt what is of the West. We fell from our (ancestral) place but could not find a footing anywhere else. Forsaking the path of Brāhmaṇahood we got our (tufts of) hair shaven. Alas ! we have discarded everything of our own and possess only an iota of knowledge."

In these days people think that a foreign returned man has a passport to obtain the high official position and can lead a rich and happy life. Kukkuṭasvāmin also thinks that way :

उत्तीर्य सिन्धुमुपगम्य सितावनि तां
तीरे विधाय वसति तमसापगायाः ।

1. P. 26.

2. P. 5-6.

ऊनद्विवर्षसमयेन गृहीतमुद्रो
राज्यश्रिया समुपयास्यति दीप्यमानः ॥¹

"Crossing the oceans, and reaching the land of the white, he will take up his abode by the bank of the Thames. Obtaining degree in less than two years he will glorify himself with government service."

The author draws a very vivid picture of a westernized man :

सकञ्चुकमुरस्सदा सदनचङ्क्रमेष्वाप्यहो
पदत्रपिहितं युगं चरणयोर्वर्षपुर्मानिनः ।
उपोढमुपलोचनं वदति सार्धंकाकुस्वरं
प्रनतितशिरोधरं चटिति कूणितं पश्यति ॥

"Oh, vain of his figure he saunters about his house always wearing a coat on his body, shoes on his feet and glasses on his eyes. He speaks in half-affected tone and with a twist of the neck casts quick sideglances".

A very living picture of the quarrel between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, a common feature of the Indian household, is depicted here. Mother-in-law cannot hear even the reasonable argument of the daughter-in-law and creates a mountain out of a mole-hill :

पिप्पली (mother-in-law) अयि दुर्हृदये ! एकस्याह्नः प्राप्ते मदवरकुमारे किमेवमध्य-
वस्यसि विभक्ता भवितुम् । जानामि ते दुराशयम् । अयि पापिष्ठे ! दुर्मुखि ! कुटुम्बकदने ! मद्ग-
विषवल्लरि ! कथमन्यथा त्वमन्वहमधिश्चरणीप्रापणोचितं मत्पैतृकं कांस्यकुण्डमपवर्ज्यं त्वज्जन्मशृ-
महार्घपरिवर्हमधिरोपितवती ।³

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Sri Mahalinga Sastri writes in an easy, flowing and pleasant style. His language is particularly free from errors grammatical or otherwise. He has a command over the expression and a fairly good knowledge of grammar. It is a tribute to this knowledge of his that in his works only a few unpāṇinian forms could be discovered. As an instance we first take up *pranaṣṭa*.⁴ By Pāṇ.naṣeḥ śāntasya (8. 4. 36) the substitution of *n* by *ṇ* is prohibited when *s* of it has become *ṣ*. The correct form therefore is *pranaṣṭa*, but then it (*pranaṣṭa*) may be a misprint for *pranaṣṭa* and no undue notice of it shall be taken here.

1. P. 6.

2. p. 7.

3. P. 20.

4. Kaunḍinyaprahasanam, p. 8

Further, the use of the active *adhyavoḍha*¹ with the passive *mayā* is indefensible. Still more indefensible is the use of *Vānarā* in place of the regular *Vānarī* in the sentence *saundaryasampat bhūtapūrvavānarāyāḥ*.²

Equally jarring is the use of some rare words like *bheṣa*³ and such constructions as *bhavatr idānīṁ vāntpadye*⁴, "Well, I now understand".

In the form *Kāmayānī* the augment *muk* by Pāṇ... 'āne muk' (7. 3. 82) has been avoided. Though such forms are quite frequent in older literature and a justification for them is offered by the grammarians on the basis of the noninvariability of the rules pertaining to augments (*āgamaśāstrasyānityatvāt*) still they are rare in classical literature and should be avoided in modern Sanskrit which follows for all practical purposes the norms set by the master grammarian Pāṇini.

Occasionally we come across an aberration of gender too, as for example in *kim idam dvāri śavāprasthānaparyāyam*⁵ *varṭate* where *paryāya* which is admittedly a masculine word is used in the neuter.

The writer eminently succeeds in giving us a graphic word picture. As an example we may mention the description of the Vidūṣaka after he has gone through the news item in a newspaper relating to sex change :

उत्फुल्लनयनयुग्मं विकासिगण्डं मुहुः स्फुटद्वासम् ।
अन्तर्बर्गनिरोधादुद्धूताङ्गं विचेष्टते किमिदम् ॥

"What is this which is quivering ? Both of its eyes are wide open. The cheeks are swollen. The laughter is bursting out again and again. On account of keeping back the internal upsurge the limbs are going up."

The author shows his skill in the description of nature too. The poet in him is seen at his best in all these descriptions. As an illustration we may mention the following verse wherein the serene beauty of the Himālaya reflected in the lake is described :

प्रान्तोन्नमज्जरठदुर्गदृषच्चतुष्क-
प्रत्युग्रदर्पणदशामवलम्बमाने ।

1. Śṛṅgāranārādiyam, p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 4.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 2
6. Ubhayarūpakam, p. 31.
7. Śṛṅgāranārādiyam, p. 1.

अस्मिंस्तु पारभरवेष्टितशृङ्गशोभा-

मालोक्यन्निव विभाति हिमालयोऽयम् ॥¹

"This Himālaya appears charming, looking as it were for the beauty of the peaks covered all over with thick snow in this (lake) which assumes the form of a shining mirror set in a frame of old inaccessible stones which are jutting out."

At another place too the author eminently succeeds in catching the beauty and the serenity of the Himālayas :

अहो निश्च्योतत इव प्रशान्तरसं समन्तात् अचलसन्निवेशः निर्भरनिविडै-
कान्त्यपीडापिण्डिताभोगनिर्यासनिरतिशयम् ॥²

"Oh ! the hills all round drip as it were the nectar of tranquillity which is thick on account of the exuding of the solidified pain of too much of solitude (lit. highly thick solitude)".

The author has a good knowledge of the delicacies which tickle the palate a number of which he mentions in the following verse :

पिष्टापूपं मोदकं माषपूपं
सक्तुं स्वीयं लड्डुकं शङ्कुलीं वा ।
पौलिं फेणीं शर्करान्नं करम्भ
स्वाद्यं खाद्यं किन्तु ते कल्पयामि ॥³

Not only does he know the names of the variety of dishes, he shows his familiarity with the detailed recipes too. Thus when coming to *Prthukāṇṇa* he says :

घृतभृष्टमुपेतनारिकेलं
छुरितैलं मधुगोस्तनीफलाढ्यम् ।
पृथुलोचनि कल्पयाशु मह्यं
पृथुकान्नं गुडपाकसंप्रक्लृप्तम् ॥⁴

"O ye, with large eyes, prepare quickly for me the *prthukāṇṇa* (cooked aval) preparation of *guḍa*, fried in ghee, with an admixture of coconut with the sprinkling of honey and rich in sweet dry grapes."

Elsewhere too we have the same kind of impressive display of the knowledge of the names of the eatables :

1. Ibid, p. 7.
2. Ibid.
3. Kaundinyaprahasanam, p. 2.
4. Ibid.

जिह्वाला च विविधभक्ष्यविधानदक्षा । तत्किमद्य मोदकानारभते उत शिखरिणीं राध्नाति
आहोस्विल्लङ्घुकान् भावयति, अथवा पौलि निष्पादयति । उताहो वाटिकाशङ्कुलीप्रमुखं लावणं
संविधानविशेषं विदधाति ।¹

The author's favourite figure of speech seems to be simile in which he shows his forte quite often. Some of his similes are particularly delightful, as for example, when he compares the difficulty in the choice of a dish out of the many served with a generous hero who has chosen (for companionship) one out of his many wives,² or when he compares the wide open door with the open heart of the propitiated deity³ or when he compares Kaundinya with a dog whose madness has increased due to Summer⁴ or when he compares the evasion of a reply with the crouching of its back by a monkey.⁵

At one place the author gives us a chain of four similes wherein the indigestion or the heaviness caused by the various dishes is compared to the other matching things in this world :

माषापूपः सुहृदिब शठः क्लेशदायी विपाके
साधारण्यात् परिचित इवानादरस्सक्तुपिण्डे ।
अस्त्युद्देगो मधुरविकृतिष्वाप्तवाक्येषु यद्वत्
सेवाक्लेशो रसविधुरता शङ्कुलीदुष्प्रबन्धे ॥⁶

"The *māṣāpūpa* is difficult to digest like a wicked friend who gives trouble in the end; there is indifference towards *saktupiṣṭa*, it being very common, like the indifference towards an acquaintance; there is revulsion for sweet preparations like the one for the words of the reliable persons; in the tedious preparation of *Jalebi* there is no flavour just as there is no interest in undergoing the hardships of service."

Occasionally we come across in the plays certain proverbs and aphorisms too. A few of the choicest ones are reproduced below :

(क) उत्वणारम्भा इव दृश्यमाना व्याघयः कदाचिद् भ्रान्तिमूलका एवानुपदं निरूप्यन्ते ।⁷

1. Ibid, p. 5.
2. Ibid, p. 2.
3. Ibid, p. 7.
4. Ibid, p. 11.
5. Ubhayarūpakam, p. 4.
6. Kaundinyaprahasanam, p. 2.
7. Ibid, p. 9.

- (ख) यत्पुरुषा बलात्कारेण तस्त्रयो ललिततरं साहसेनैव साधयन्ति ।¹
 (ग) क्रोधिनः खलु प्रायः पश्चात्तापैकशरणा भवन्ति ।²
 (घ) ग्रहो स्नेहशेषणः कालमहस ऊष्मा ।³
 (ङ) मनोरथोच्चयसिद्धिभावनापक्षतावच्छेदकपर्यायं पुत्रभाण्डम् ।⁴
 (च) प्रवादापवादविवादानामभूमिर्नाम नगरसंवासः ।⁵
 (छ) कुतः कूष्माण्डमन्वसि ह्यादयसि ।⁶

We would close our critique on the farces of Mahalinga Sastri by a note on their humour. The ostensible purpose of a humorous skit is to amuse the audience, to humour them, to relieve their tedium and boredom. It is therefore pertinent to examine as to the extent to which the author has succeeded in this purpose. The writer calls himself *hāsyotsāhī*. That he is *hāsyotsāhī* is proved by the number of the farces he has written. His is the greatest single contribution to modern Sanskrit farces. But then here comes a snag. Are we to go by the number of his humorous skits or by the quality of his humour? Like the older Sanskritists the author succumbs to the temptation of giving us cheap humour bordering sometimes on vulgarity. He also depends for the creation of it on odd devices. We take up his farces one by one and attempt our appraisal of humour in them.

In the Kaunḍinyaprahasanam the very theme of the eagerness of one to help himself with the food of others is employed to create humour. But this is not something which can appeal to refined taste. Humour, to entertain, does not necessarily have to descend to low level. The very fact that a deliberate effort is put in to create humour robs it of much of its entertaining effect. In the very Nāndī the reader is given a fore-taste of what is to come. The comparison of poetry with Jalebi is peculiar and is indicative of the fact that the author is out to create a composition where by means of such comparisons some entertainment is sought to be provided to the audience :

मृद्वी घृताञ्जरपुटे लघुपीडनेन
 श्च्योतन्निरस्तररसा रसकोविदानाम् ।

1. Ibid., p. 10.
2. Ibid., p. 11.
3. Ubhayarupakam p. 4.
4. Ibid., p. 8.
5. Ibid., p. 12.
6. Ibid., p. 23.

वरणप्रकर्षविलसद्बहलोर्मिकाढ्या

युष्मान् धिनोतु कविता मधुशङ्कुलीव ॥¹

Humour of situation is considered superior to the humour of crude words and actions. And that is what is particularly missing in this play. The humour here revolves round the persistent efforts of Kaundinya to help himself with the delicacies prepared by Grdhranāsa and Jihmalā and the equally persistent efforts of them (Grdhranāsa and Jihmalā) to dodge him. It is a battle of wits. In the end Grdhranāsa is outwitted by Kaundinya who throws chaff (not the proverbial dust) into the eyes of Grdhranāsa and makes a sumptuous feast of the dishes prepared.

Gluttony has often been made use of by old Sanskrit writers to create a humorous effect. It has been considered to be the part of the make up of a Vidūṣaka. In the present play too this has been made use of to create humour. Kaundinya's reference to his uncle Vaṭikānātha Miśra who lost his life by eating ninety nine vaṭikās while he still laid his hand on the hundredth one as a proof for the existence of the tradition of gluttony existing in his family does have a little bit of comic effect in forcing smiles on the faces of the readers but certainly not laughter :

कुतः कुलधर्मेऽस्वरसता नाम श्रेयस्कामस्य । तथा च मत्पितृव्यो वटिकानाथमिश्रः कस्य
नाभूत्मान्यगुणः ।

कृत्वा पणं हि वटिकाशतभक्षणाय

पूर्णे नवाधिकनवत्यशनेऽथ यस्य ।

उद्गीर्णलोचनयुगस्य पुरा मुमूर्षोः

शिष्टैकसङ्ग्रहर्चि कृतिनः स्मरन्ति ॥²

In the Śṛṅgāranāradyam we have a peculiar play where the principal sentiment is the comic followed closely by erotic. The writer himself calls it (in the Preface) as a 'Comic Opera'. The title suggests the importance in it of Śṛṅgāra too. The change of sex of a sage like Nārada and the monkey like Rkṣarajas provides the comic relief while the Rkṣarajas' seduction of Radanā provides a full play of the erotic. Occasionally this erotic is carried to the limit of obscenity, as for example, when Nārada unknowingly enters the cave and finds the Gandharva couple engaged in performing the sexual

1. Kaundinyaprahasanam, p. 1.

2. Ibid, p. 4.

act. The comic however takes precedence over the erotic. Even Nārada is conscious of the laugh that his change of sex will provide to the people ;

अये महद्दिदं प्रहसनं संवृत्तम्. लोकोपहासव्यसनिनो नारदस्येदं वृद्धिपरिगुणितं
निर्यातनम् ।¹

The very name Radanā from Nārada (though not the innovation of the playwright) is quite clever and ingenious concerning itself as it does with the shifting of the place of the letters of the original word. At one or two places the reader is provided with a good laugh, as for example, when Nārada (Radanā) pays Rkṣarajas, who had been passionately wooing her, in the same coin. First the aggressiveness of Rkṣarajas and then his total discomfiture is what the reader enjoys most. The second is when Nārāyaṇa who is called by Radanā (Nārada) for succour himself feels attracted towards her and wants to enjoy her. There is no way out for poor Nārada to escape the ridicule of the people and to come back to his original masculine form.

In the Ubhayaṛūpakam, the latest of his farces, yawning chasm between the village and the city life forms the theme which provides many humorous interludes. The ultramodernism sweeping over the cities which claims victims even among young men born and bred in villages, the lure that it has even for the older generation and the ignorance and the prejudices in which the country folk are still steeped forms a contrast which the author has done well to dramatize in his play. The parents, the poor villagers, pinning all their hopes on their city educated son and his total disregard for them is a phenomenon by no means new. The humour in the play rests on the nemesis that operates on the helpless parents who feel badly let down by their son. In this play we have a humour of words and humour of situation. The name calling of the daughter-in-law by the old mother-in-law who would fly into rage at the slightest opportunity does succeed in forcing smiles on the faces of the readers. More successful however is the scene where the sudden disappearance of Chāgala leads villagers to come out with many remarks. As many mouths as many words :

कुहूः—किमासीदस्य दौर्मनस्यनिदानम् ।

पेषणी—(लोहला) किं गृह एवोद्बन्धनमकरोदुत्तान्यत्र ।

कुहूः—विषं भक्षयति स्मेति मम श्रवणयोरुपगतम् ।

1. Sṛṅgāranāradiyam, p. 12.

पेवणी—किमुपलब्धं मृतशरीरम् ?¹

The climax however comes when the shaven hair in the packet is pronounced by the village physician as some deadly poison with the seriousness of a chemical analyst. The hullabaloo that follows this 'discovery' is that which cannot but send people into peals of laughter.

For humorous effect in this play the writer depends on the strange-sounding names too, as for example, Kuṅkuṭasvāmin, Vajraghoṣa, Chāgala, Pippalī, Śampā. This is however an old device and fails to click these days.

Taking an overall view of Y. Mahalinga Sastri's humour we cannot help but remark that it is not something which may appeal to refined taste.

It requires deeper insight to create humour which may have special appeal for present-day audiences.

1. Ubhayarupakam, p. 27.

Vimuktiḥ

INTRODUCTORY

The *Vimukti* in two acts and 32 pages is written by Dr. V. Raghavan. It was staged at the Fifth Annual day celebrations of the Sanskrita Ranga Madras, in 1963. It is an allegorical farce where philosophical conceptions like soul, mind, senses, nature, illusion, qualities (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) and God are personified. The Brāhmaṇa in the play represents soul. His six sons Laṭakeśvara Jyeṣṭha, Calaprotha, Śuṇḍāla, Dīrghaśravas, Ulūkākṣa, Kaṇḍūla, are mind and five senses respectively. The Brāhmaṇa's wife Trivarninī is nature, her mother Māyāvatī is illusion. Her three sisters Candrikā, Śonitā and Hastinī are the three qualities (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), the old man is God, the Daṁṣṭriṇ is Yama, the God of death.

PLOT

"In this play, in and through incidents of common happening in a miserable household, with a pathetic husband, domineering wife, unruly sons, unwanted sisters-in-law and sinister mother-in-law, is presented the idea of Soul, overpowered by Māyā, caught up in Matter and Senses, yearning for and working out its liberation or *Vimukti*."

First act—The Sūtradhāra, conversing in the Prologue with his Assistant, indicates the underlying philosophical allegory of the play which is woven outwardly as a realistic farce.

Ātmanātha, an unfortunate Brāhmaṇa after his morning austerities, tries to call his sons and wife to find how the posture of things is in the house that morning. First comes Ulūkākṣa (Owl-eyed), one of his sons, whose chief preoccupation is woman-gazing. They start discussing about another son Calaprotha (whose ever active mouth alternated its activity between eating and gossiping), who had gone early to the market to buy vegetables. Enters another son Śuṇḍāla (the Long-nosed) from whom it is learnt that another brother, Dīrghaśravas (the Long-eared) has gone to a piper's house to discuss the number of *svaras* in music. The father is vexed with the vagaries of his undisciplined sons and curses their mother.

Enters the wife of the Brāhmaṇa, Trivarninī. Enraged at her husband's

insinuations, she taunts him, runs down him, asserts her authority, and explains to him as to how she has to run the whole show of the house. Unable to stand all this, the husband is anxious to leave the house and have some peace in seclusion. The wife swears that so long as her power lasts, he cannot leave. She makes reference to her mother too a past-master in magic and witchcraft. Whenever her husband says anything critical of the sons or of herself, she flares up.

At this juncture, the eldest son, Laṭakeśvara (leader of the rogues) comes in with three of his mother's sisters, Candrikā (Moonlight), Śonitā (Blood-red) and Hastinī (the Heavy). Trivarninī welcomes only the latter two and frowns upon the first. Ātmanātha finds the latter two as bad as his wife and is all the more perturbed by this addition to his overburdened family.

A heated discussion ensues now between the father and the eldest son as to how, with their meagre resources and the way the sons were living, they could run their large family. He asks his father to go away as he pleases, and taking over the responsibility of managing the house, calls his brothers and asks each of them to take to some profession. Each mentions a calling suited to his own self-indulgence. The brothers do not like the substitution of the father's domination by that of the eldest brother. The mother intervenes, and disliking the idea of her beloved children being put to any strain for livelihood, promises herself to conjure up everything required for their maintenance. But then the mother and the eldest son find that their 'house' (the Body, *Śarīra*) is in a most dilapidated state and that unless it is repaired, even slight *vāta-doṣa* or *jala-doṣa* would bring it down completely. It appears that in that Maricikā-nagarī (mirage city), there was hardly a house which was not liable to fall.

Second act—opens with Ātmanātha at the river side, in the evening doing his Sandhyā-worship. He recalls to his mind his eldest sister-in-law Candrikā and expresses his longing for her and disgust for his wife and the two other sisters-in-law. Now Candrikā comes there to fetch pure water, *tīrtha*. But their meeting is momentary as the suspicious wife Trivarninī now runs up to that place trying to find out Candrikā. The Brāhmaṇa hides her in the Maṭha nearby. As Ātmanātha and Trivarninī are in the midst of another wordy quarrel, some citizens who pass by observe them and express their sympathy for the poor man.

Enters now the fierce-looking Daṃṣṭrin (Dharmarāja) who proclaims

that, according to the orders of the lord of the City (Svāmin), the dilapidated houses will be pulled down and the house (Deha) of Ātmanātha and Trivarninī will accordingly fall early next morning.

Citizens who are passing by are accosted by the perplexed Trivarninī who asks them as to whether there is a Svāmin at all, holding authority over their house or the City. The Citizens, none of whom has ever seen the Svāmin, argue; some deny him, some infer that there should be somebody like him, and some affirm that he is;

In the short time available before he is due to be thrown out of his house by Daṁṣṭrin, Ātmanātha wants to be alone or run away to some other place. His wife continues to harass. Some citizens console him that when his old house is pulled down, the Svāmin himself would allot a new house to him.

The sons rush in now with unseemly complaints about each other and two of the aunts. Daṁṣṭrin appears on the scene, announces the Svāmin's order to arrest the unruly sons and throw the two aunts into the river for their misbehaviour. The arrested sons are to be made to fast and be in servitude to the Svāmin.

Ātmanātha is perplexed as to what course he should now take, to go back to the family, to follow the path shown by one of the citizens to an unknown destination of supposed happiness or to fall into the river. As he is about to take to the last course, an old man, Vṛddha, from within the nearby Maṭha, hastenes to prevent him and gives salutary advice to him. He diagnoses Ātmanātha's mental delusion as due to the influence of his sinister mother-in-law Māyāvati who exerts her witchcraft unseen, and he mutters a Mantra into Ātmanātha's ear, a Mantra that would kill the mother-in-law and bring his wife on her knees. The Mantra works: Trivarninī rushes, bows down repentant and begs pardon of her husband for her past conduct and asks for her sister Candrikā who alone, she now says, is fit to be her husband's wife. The Vṛddha reveals himself as Svāmin, the Lord, and blesses that with Trivarninī brought to tranquillity, and made Prasannā, Ātmanātha might be happy in the company of both Trivarninī called by the new name now of Prasannā and Candrikā, and blesses their new union.

Ātmanātha expresses his gratitude to the Lord and in the Bharatavākya, requests the spectators to understand the play as an allegory—that the Svāmin is Lord Himself, Daṁṣṭrin is Dharmarāja, Ātmanātha is the Soul, the House is the Body, the Mother-in-law is Māyā, the wife is Prakṛti or Primordial Matter, the Sister-in-law is the three Guṇas Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, the

six Sons are the Mind and the Five Senses and Vimukti is the sublimation of Prakṛti.

CHARACTERIZATION

As discussed before, the present drama being an allegorical one all the characters in it are the personification of abstract phenomena. The writer as suggested through the Bharatavākya gives us what represents what. The Brāhmaṇa says :

ईशस्त्वं, पुरुषोऽस्मि, गेहमिह मे देहं, स दंष्ट्री यमः,
सा भार्या प्रकृतिः, गुणा भगिनिकाः, माया च तासां प्रसूः ।
षट् पुत्रा मन इन्द्रियाणि, नगरं लोकः, विमुक्त्यै ततः
सत्त्वस्था प्रकृतिः, तथा प्रहसनं दृष्ट्वा जना जानताम् ।¹

Īśvara or *Svāmin* remains always invisible. His actions are no doubt visible. When *Trivarninī*, the wife of the Brāhmaṇa, asks the people about the *Svāmin* who has ordered to vacate the house, no one can give her a satisfactory reply. However, the last one gives some hint when he says :

आराममस्य पश्यन्ति न तं पश्यति कश्चन ।²

"They see his garden; nobody sees him." Some other remarks that if there is any master of the house he may be a very cruel person :

यद्येवं स्यात् तदा स स्वामी परमक्रूरहृदय इति मे तर्कः ।³

"If that be so I think that lord has a very, very cruel heart." Yet another expresses his opinion in the following words :

अहं पुनरुत्प्रेक्षे न स क्रूरः ।⁴

"But my surmise is that he is not cruel."

Brāhmaṇa—He is the *Puruṣa*. He does not act himself but dragged by *Prakṛti* he has to do everything. He tells his wife (*Prakṛti*) about this.

सत्यं त्वयैवैवं व्यवहारेषु आकृष्टः सीदामि । मम पुनर्नास्त्येव यत्किञ्चित् चेष्टितुमपि रुचिः,
दूरे शक्तिः ।⁵

"True it is that being dragged by you in worldly affairs I am experiencing troubles. I don't have even the desire to do anything let alone the capacity."

1. Second act, p. 160.

2. Second act, p. 150.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. P. 133.

Though he has to live with his wife (Prakṛti) and five sons (five senses) he is not happy in their company. He wants to leave them but is unable to do so :

अहो; मुञ्च माम् । कथमाकर्षति मां कान्तयष्टिरिव लोहखण्डम् ! अयि चण्डि, यत्र कुत्र व्रजामि । मुञ्च माम्, त्वया सह त्वत्पुत्रैस्सह च वासात्, अरण्यम् आत्मघातो वा वरीयः ।¹

"Oh leave me. How she drags me like a bar of magnet, a piece of iron. O ye the fierce one, I may go where I like, leave me. It is better to commit suicide or to take to forest than to live with you and your sons."

He wants to get rid of those people as early as possible. He further remarks :

मुञ्च माम् एकाकिनम् । कैवल्यं किञ्चिदनुबुभूषामि एकान्तमेत्य ।²

"Leave me alone. I would like to experience (enjoy) loneliness by coming to a secluded place."

Actually speaking he neither likes to do anything nor does engage himself in any activity. It is left only to Prakṛti and five senses to do everything in the name of Puruṣa. His eldest son represents the feeling of his mother in the following words :

पुरुषोऽपि त्वमपौरुष इति मात्रा सुष्ठु उच्यते । यत्र कुत्र कोणे भव । वयं सर्वं करिष्यामः ।³

"Mother is right when she says that though a man you have no manliness. Be in some corner or the other. We will manage everything."

Left to himself he would prefer complete solitude and calmness. He expresses his firm opinion in the following words :

मित्र ! एतस्या मायावतीपुत्र्या हस्ते पिण्डीकृतोऽस्मि । यदि स्वतन्त्रस्य मे मतिरस्मिन् विषय आद्रियेत, अहं नैव प्रवेक्ष्यामि यत्किमपि गृहम्, न स्वीकरिष्यामि यां कामपि भार्याम् ।⁴

"Friend, I am totally under the control of the daughter of Māyāvatī. If I were to be independent and consideration were to be given to my opinion in this matter, I would not enter any and every house; I would not accept any and everybody as my wife."

Trivartini — She is the wife of the Brāhmaṇa and is the personification of Nature which involves the whole world. Not only this, she has the mighty power which binds people to this world and attracts them towards her. She is the daughter of Māyāvatī, the powerful illusion. Says she :

1. P. 135.
2. P. 141.
3. Ibid.
4. P. 152.

अहं मायावतीसुता महाकर्षणमूलमन्त्राचार्याऽहम् ।¹

She can create many things out of nothing. The whole cosmic order seems to run at her command :

शून्येऽपि स्थाने मच्छक्त्या बहु बहु समुद्भावयितुं प्रभवामि ।²

"Even there where nothing exists I can bring into being many things."

She is more inclined towards her two sisters Śonitā and Hastinī (Rajas and Tamas) but has natural aversion for the third one Candrikā (Sattva). On the contrary the latter two (Śonitā and Hastinī) are never liked by Brāhmaṇa, though they want to attract him. That is why he says :

रुधिरैव निर्मितेव शोणिता एका । अपरा कुहूगर्भोदितेव काली घना च वर्तते, या जृम्भमाणवदनगुहा निद्राति अनिशम् । पूर्वा शोणिता तु अत्यन्तं मे भार्यायाः प्रियापि, मद्भार्याज्ञानं विना रहसि मां हठात् वशीकृतुं मुत्सहते ।³

"One is red as if she were created out of blood. The other is plump and dark as if she has come out of the new moon day (when the moon is invisible) who always sleeps with the cavity of her mouth remaining open. Then the former, Śonitā, though highly loved by my wife tries to bring me forcibly under her control in secluded place and without the knowledge of my wife."

The two sisters also have mighty powers. They have inherited these powers from their mother.

सन्त्यस्माकं मातृशिक्षया परम्परागताः कुलविद्याः । अस्माभिः असदपि सत्तया प्रकाश्यते, सच्च शून्यमिति निगूह्यते ।⁴

"We have come to learn from the training of our mother our traditional family lores. We present even a non-existing thing as existing and an existing thing as non-existing."

Candrikā is Sattva. Brāhmaṇa likes her very much but Prakṛti cannot tolerate their intimacy and always tries to keep them apart. Ultimately the Brāhmaṇa succeeds and Candrikā is allowed by the Svāmin (Īśvara) Himself to live with Brāhmaṇa in their new bouse.

Laṭakeśvara, Calaprotha, Śuṇḍāla, Dīrghaśravas, Ulūkākṣa and Kaṇḍāla—

1. P. 135.

2. P. 143.

3. P. 147.

4. P. 138

These are the five senses, along with mind. Laṭakeśvara, the mind, is the eldest among them. He is famous for his minute form. Trivarṇinī explains this to her sisters :

इमे नः पुत्राः; ज्येष्ठमेनं जानीत । अणुरूपोऽपि महाव्यापकोऽयम् इति कृत्वा युष्मान् इह आनेतुम् अमुं प्रेषयम् ।¹

"These are our sons. Know him to be the eldest one. Thinking that even, though minute in form he is highly pervasive, I sent him to bring you all here."

Calaprotha personifies the sense of eating. He is always after eating something. Śuṇḍāla being the sense of smell is always attracted towards fragrant objects. Dīrghaśravas is the sense of hearing. He is always inclined towards good music. Ulūkākṣa is the sense of seeing. He is attracted towards beautiful ladies and Kaṇḍūla the youngest personifies the sense of touch.

The city is the personification of the body.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The humorous skit noticed above reveals Dr. V. Raghavan in a new light. He is here a satirist with a pungent sense of humour, a great quality in a man otherwise so serious. His humorous writings include, apart from the play noticed above, a couple of poems too, such as the *Dambhavibhūtiḥ* or *Tālapatramāhātmyam*.

In his play the *Vimuktiḥ* we find the author giving the reason for composing it in the prologue itself which is to provide some fun to the people in the shortest period of time keeping in view their multifarious duties which leave them little time for long poems or plays.

The author has composed his play not for any and every kind of audiences; it may well be beyond their ken, but for specialized type of audiences—the audiences with well disciplined minds and intellects. In the prologue itself through the *Sūtradhāra* he says : कृतात्मानो विहितमतयोऽत्र सामाजिकाः ।

This fact is also reinforced by the subject-matter of the play where the whole world is an object of fun.

इदमलौकिकं प्रहसनम् । प्रहास्यं वस्तु लोक एव कृत्स्नः ।

The work is too abstruse and abstract to interest a common man. This limitation of the work is recognized by the author himself who calls his play *guḍha* and *kuṭa*.

1. P. 133.

Mythological And Legendary Plays

Mythological And
Legendary Plays

Virājasarojinī

INTRODUCTORY

The play Virājasarojinī is written by Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa. It has four acts and 91 pages and is published from Calcutta in the Saka Year 1879. The play unlike the author's other historical plays, like Śivājī-caritam, Mivārapratāpam and Vaṅgiyapratāpam, deals with the love affair of King Haridaśva, the ruler of Mālava, with Sarojinī, a Gandharva princess.

PLOT

First act—King Haridaśva accompanied by the Vidūṣaka is enjoying secretly Sarojinī's conversation with her friends. Sarojinī has come to worship Lord Śiva with her two friends. They engage themselves in a pleasant talk about Sarojinī's marriage. The king overhears them and comes to know that Sarojinī is interested in him. He appears before Sarojinī. At that very time Sarojinī is informed that her mother wants to see her. The lovers meet only for a few moments and then depart. The king is very much fascinated by Sarojinī's beauty and charm. He yearns to see her once again. Meanwhile he is very much disturbed by a heated argument between two men each one of whom wants to make Sarojinī his wife.

Second act—In the preliminary remarks in the second act, it is informed that Citralekhā, the friend of Sarojinī, has come by the order of princess Sarojinī to the capital of Haridaśva to kidnap him. She comes just at that place where the king along with his friend Vidūṣaka is reproaching his fate for not providing him with the opportunity to contact Sarojinī. His queen is also annoyed with him because he does not now pay her as much attention as he used to do in the past. He of course wants to please her and waits for her in his bedroom but under the magic influence of Citralekhā he goes to sleep even before she (the queen) arrives. But when she comes, unfortunately the king in his sleep calls Sarojinī as his beloved and says many more such things as infuriate the queen ever more. She has now got the proof that the king loves another girl. At the same time Sarojinī also comes there to have a

look at the sleeping king. Being a Gandharva princess she has the power of becoming visible to one person and invisible to another at one and the same time. When the king awakens he can see Sarojinī in his room. To the queen however she is invisible. The king again praises her beauty and expresses his love for her. This proves the proverbial last straw on the camel's back and the queen leaves for her apartment in a huff. But before doing so she slips a letter under the king's pillow. She goes to the Pramadaavana and orders her maid servant to bring the king and the Vidūṣaka there. The Vidūṣaka reaches there. The queen asks him the reason for the king's indifference towards her. The Vidūṣaka attempts some answer which does not satisfy her. She orders her maid servant to put him in chains. Just at that time the king also appears there and the queen asks as to why he was calling Sarojinī. The king denies, but the queen has the sound proof. Not only she, her maid servant too, has heard him calling Sarojinī. She also sends for the letter which she had placed under his pillow. The king reads the contents in which he is condemned for showing love to more than one woman at one and the same time. The king tries to pacify her by putting forward many false excuses but the queen is hard to please and leaves him in a huff,

The king is again in a fix. He can neither leave his queen nor can he forget the fascinating beauty of Sarojinī. Both the king and the Vidūṣaka try to find a way out of this dilemma.

Third act—In the first part of this act the Vidūṣaka informs while talking to Śāntādeva, a teacher, that the queen is against the marriage of Haridaśva with Sarojinī. On the other hand Subāhu, a demon, is chasing Sarojinī who is all alone. Sarojinī is very much afraid of him. She pleads that he should not follow her but the passionate demon does not pay any heed to her words and wants to catch hold of her. Sarojinī cries for help. Fortunately, the army chief of Haridaśva hears her cry and comes to her rescue. Sarojinī is mortally afraid and falls into swoon. The army chief condemns Subāhu and gives him a good fight. The demon frightened and terrified runs away. The chief carries away fainted Sarojinī to the Pramadaavana in the palace of king Haridaśva.

Fourth act—It is informed that the king having no interest left in his kingly duties (due to Sarojinī) is missing from the royal palace. He is shown loitering here and there. He has lost his mental balance to such an extent as to take every second person as Sarojinī. He approaches the two grass

cutters and takes one of them to be Sarojinī. Both the grass cutters realize that the man is not in his senses. One of them jokingly orders him to carry the bundle of grass for him in the market. The king is about to lift it when Vidūṣaka, who is looking for him, comes there. He tells the grass cutters that the man with whom they are talking is no other than king Haridaśva himself. Vidūṣaka is sad to see the king in this condition. He assures him that he would show him the real Sarojinī. First the king does not believe him but after sometime agrees to accompany him. The king is mighty happy to see Sarojinī in his own palace. The Purohita sent by the father of Sarojinī comes there and gives the information that the father of Sarojinī has requested king Haridaśva to marry Sarojinī. Two friends of Sarojinī also approach at that auspicious moment and congratulate her. The play ends with the Bharatavākya uttered by the king.

CHARACTERIZATION

The play has five main characters i.e. Haridaśva, the hero, Sarojinī the heroine, Subāhu, the demon, the Vidūṣaka and the queen.

Haridaśva—He is a romantic hero. He happens to see Sarojinī, the Gandharva princess, while she is going to worship Lord Śiva. He is attracted by her beauty and charm and falls deeply in love with her. He wants to marry her. He expresses this desire of his to his friend, the Vidūṣaka, in the following words :

दिवसो भविष्यति स मे कदा सखे !

प्रमदा यदेयमतिलोलपाणिना ।

अवलोकमानजनलोचनैः सह

स्रजमीदृशीं मम गले प्रदास्यति ॥¹

"O my friend ! when will that day dawn for me when this lady will put such a garland in my neck with her rather trembling hand while the eyes of the people would be witnessing this sight."

Though he is already married yet like other kings he becomes indifferent to his queen and does not attend to his kingly duties. His only concern is to obtain Sarojinī. Not only when he is awake, in his sleep too he thinks about Sarojinī alone and talks loudly with her. This creates suspicion in the mind of his queen but when she wants to know something from him directly he cleverly tries to evade the whole thing but the queen is not to be easily put off. The king is not prone to tell a lie but at the moment he has

1. First act, p. 13.

no option but to take shelter behind it. In his heart of hearts, however, he does not like it and feels quite uneasy :

राजा—(आत्मगतम्) अहो ! अस्मिन् खल्वितथकथासमर्थने समाकुलोऽस्मि संवृत्तः । यतः

एकस्य मिथ्यावचनस्य रक्षणे

सहस्रमिथ्यावचनप्रयोजनम् ।

विहङ्गमं चालयितुं विहायसि

विहित्रिमं वस्तु बहु व्यपेक्षते ।¹

"The king (to himself) : I am feeling uneasy in upholding the true story, for it requires a hundred untruths to uphold one untruth. To enable an aeroplane to move in the sky many a contrivance is required"

The king finds himself in a fix. He cannot totally ignore his queen nor can he turn his mind away from Sarojinī. The following lines bring out vividly this mental conflict of his :

हन्त ! किमत्र विधेयम् ? देवीविसर्जने गृहशून्यता, देवीरक्षणे पुनरविवासः सरोजिनी-विरहस्य, क्व सरोजिनीत्यन्वेषणे उन्मत्तताप्रतीतिः, सरोजिनीलालसात्यागे जीवनविफलता, सरोजिनी-स्पृहया च सततस्त्रीमूर्तिचिन्ता, उभयपरित्यागे च गृहत्याग एव युक्तः ।²

"Oh what should be done here ? If I turn out the queen there will be loneliness in the house. If I keep her, the separation from Sarojinī would come to stay. The search for the whereabouts of Sarojinī would give the impression of madness. Life will have no meaning left in it if desire for Sarojinī is given up. The desire for Sarojinī would mean the constant preoccupation with the thoughts of woman. If I give up both then the only proper thing for me would be to leave the house."

The king is so much engrossed in the thoughts of Sarojinī that he forgets that he is a king. He moves here and there like a commoner. He loses his mental balance too :

विहाय मणिकुण्डलप्रभृति राजचिह्नं, दधत्

मनोज्ञमनलङ्कृतं सरसकाव्यतुल्यं वपुः ।

प्रभावपरिलक्षितः प्रियतमागुणं वर्णयन्

पुरात् किल विनिर्गतो मलिनमत्तवेशोऽभवत् ॥³

"The king went out of the city putting on the dirty dress of the mad persons and singing the praises of his beloved. He could be recognized a

1. Second act, p. 41.

2. Second act, p. 50.

3. Fourth act, p. 70

king by his majesty alone. He had given up outward signs of kingship, such as the earrings studded with jewels. His charming body like the poetry without figures of speech is without ornament."

But this is only a temporary phase. When he recovers his beloved (Sarojinī) he is the same old king Haridaśva. He handles the Purohita carefully when he approaches him with the request that he should marry Sarojinī. The king's answer to the Purohita's request is short, polite and to the point :

भवतु । (प्रकाशम्) भगवन् ! अनुरुणद्धि भवान्, आदिशति नः गन्धर्वराजः, तदिदमवश्य-
मङ्गीकर्त्तव्यम् ?¹

"Well, (*openly*) the venerable one ! The Gandharvarāja too commands me. So this should surely be accepted."

The character of king Haridaśva is depicted in the play in a somewhat stereotyped way. His passion for new beauties and charms, forgetfulness of kingly duties, indifference towards his former queen, make him look rather a type of conventional king with little individuality of his own.

Sarojinī—She is a young Gandharva princess who is deeply in love with Haridaśva. But even in love she maintains her poise and dignity. The king notices this quality of hers and says :

प्रगल्भस्वभावा चित्रलेखा प्रकाशमेवालपति, गभीरस्वभावा सरोजिनी तु इङ्गितेनैवालाप-
मेनमनुमोदते ।²

"Bold Citralekhā talks openly but serious Sarojinī approves of what she says by gestures only."

Her beauty has peculiar charm about it. It is like moonlight scattered all over her body :

लावण्यैर्लुलिता शरीरलतिका कान्तिः स्मरक्लान्तिकृत्

हेमस्तम्भनिभोर्युग्मकुचयोः किञ्चिद्विशेषान्विता ।

निर्गच्छत्यतिसूक्ष्मशुक्लवसनच्छिद्रान्तरालादिय-

मत्पाल्पाच्चलतः प्रवृष्टजलदात् ज्योत्स्नेव शीतद्युते ।³

"Her slim figure is highly charming; her loveliness surpasses even that of Cupid. It is slightly more prominently noticeable at the thighs and the breasts resembling pillars of gold, It slips out of the interspaces super fine white cloth very much like the moonlight which pierces through the cloud moving slowly after having shed off its rain."

1. Fourth act, p. 89

2. First act, p. 10.

3. Ibid.

The creator has created her as one of the finest pieces he could create :

इन्दोः कान्तिं हरिणनयनं राजहंसस्य यानं
रम्भास्तम्भौ मदनधनुषी कोकिलानां स्वरञ्च ।
आनीय प्राग् विधिरभिमतान् स्रष्टुकामस्तु तांस्तान्
नारीरत्नं समसृजदिदं तत्परं कौतुकेन ॥¹

"It was out of curiosity that the creator actuated by the desire for creation brought into being this excellent jewel of a woman having first put together such desirable things as the lustre of the moon, the eye of a deer, the gait of a swan, the trunks of the two plantain trees, the two bows of Cupid and the sound of the cuckoos."

Sarojinī has true love for Haridaśva. First she sends her friend Citralekhā to kidnap him but impatient as she is to see him she herself comes to have a look at him. The following lines express her deep love for him :

(विलोक्य) हन्त भोः ! स एवायं शयितस्तिष्ठति । (सानुरागम्) यदि मदीयेन चक्षुषा अमुं किलावलोकयन्ति लोकाः तदायं ममेव तेषामपि प्रियतमो भवेत् ।²

"(Seeing) Oh, the same one is sleeping (here), (lovingly), If people look at him with my eyes then they too would love him most as I do."

Though not wedded legally, Sarojinī thinks Haridaśva to be her husband. When Subāhu, a powerful demon, wants to make her his wife forcibly, she plainly says :

न खलु हरिदश्वतः अन्यो मम आत्मजनः ।³

"Nobody other than Haridaśva is my kinsman (husband)."

Last of all when the lovers meet after a long separation, Sarojinī, though mighty happy, does not transgress the limits of propriety. She remembers her mother and father, who could have given her in marriage there and then :

दैवप्रसादतः समासादितो मया दृढतिमिरे पूर्णचन्द्रः, किन्तु अत्र नास्ति प्रियापत्यो नित्यनिरातङ्गो जनकः, अपत्यवत्सला अम्बापि ।⁴

"It is my good luck that I have obtained the full moon in pitch darkness but here are absent my always fearless father and mother both of whom are fond of their children."

1. First act, p. 11-12.
2. Second act, p. 32
3. Third act, p. 60.
4. Fourth act, p. 81.

Thus we see that Sarojinī is a young princess who falls in love like any young lady but has self respect, poise and charm with which she never stumbles and comes out successful in the end.

Other Characters—The Vidūṣaka, the queen and Subāhu are the other three characters of this play. The Vidūṣaka is a typical comic character. Unwillingly he would disclose a secret through his stupidity. At times the king is angry with him but forgives him because he keeps him good humoured whenever he is gloomy. He helps Haridaśva a lot in arranging his meeting with Sarojinī.

The queen no doubt loves Haridaśva very much but she cannot restrain herself when she comes to know that he loves another girl. Out of jealousy she permits herself harsh words against the king.

Subāhu: the demon, is a villain who wants to take away Sarojinī forcibly but does not succeed in his evil designs as Vīrasimha, the army chief of Haridaśva, gives him a good fight. The demon, frightened and broken, takes to heels.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

One of the great writers of the Twentieth Century Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa has enriched Sanskrit literature with a very large number of his works. He has a very pleasant and racy style with something of the old classical ring about it. He knows the genius of Sanskrit in all its pristine purity in the midst of a mass of literature where the vernacular influence is unmistakable. The present writer not unoften resorts to a style reminiscent of the old writers of Sanskrit prose romances with all its long-winded descriptions, metaphors, double entendres and the like.

The author is both a poet and a playwright. There is therefore a constant conflict going on in his mind between the two for ascendancy. And it is very often that the former has the upper hand. The considerations of dramatic quick movement of events are thus sacrificed by him quite a few times at the altar of poetic exuberance. What may be good for a novel or old type prose romance is imported into the play—a square peg in a round hole. Some of the passages quoted below can easily go down as some of the very best in Sanskrit literature but a little out of place in a play.

(क) अपि च भवत्याः प्रथमदर्शनात् प्रभृति मम वैराग्यं विषये देव्याञ्च, अरुचिराहारे शरीरे च, शून्यता आशायां मनसि च, वियोगः सुखेन त्वया च, कण्टकमङ्गे त्वत्सङ्गे च नित्यमेव वर्तते । किञ्च मया हि दूरता भवत्याः, समीपता दुःखस्य, अनुकूलमोत्सुक्यं विरोधी

पुष्पधन्वा, रतिर्भवत्यां, विरतिः कामे चानुभूयते ।¹

(ख) येन हि स्वतन्त्राणां रागो वदने न पुनरात्मनि, अनुकम्पा शिरसि न मनसि, सरलता भाषणे नाचरणे, निर्मलता च विहसिते न चान्तःकरणे इति ।²

(ग) येन हि, अवलापि स्वाधीना, भीरुरपि महाराजविद्रोहिणी, दक्षिणानुगतापि वामा, मनुष्यकन्यापि महिषी, वरवर्णिन्यपि विवरवर्णिनी, गृहस्थापि दण्डधारिणी, सजलनयनापि रूक्षदृष्टिः, पतिद्विषिकापि विदूषकविद्वेषिणी । हन्त भोः ! सरोजिनीलाभे क्व वा मनसि महानन्दः, नयने लावण्यमयी स्वर्गीयमूर्तिः, कर्णे मधुमिश्रितं भ्रमरगुञ्जितम्, अधरे मधुराघरमुष्मा, वक्षसि च महती कम्पा ।³

The same poet in the author gives us fine poetry in the play clothed in flawless expression. The figures of speech like Arthāntaranyāsa, Upameyo-pamā, Nidarśanā follow each other in quick succession lending to the play a charm all their own. The similes and metaphors have an aptness about them which makes them particularly delightful. To have a fuller appreciation of the great beauty of his poetry we cannot resist here the temptation of reproducing a few choice specimens.

The natural phenomenon of young damsels acquiring a taste for finer things of life leaving behind the innocence of childhood is described by the poet in his inimitable style in the following verse :

उदयति रसिकत्वं यौवने कामिनीनां

सततमनपनेया मुग्धता शैशवे तु ।

मधु भवति नलिन्याः पुष्पितायाः स्वभावात्

पतति तु कलिकाया न्यस्तमप्यात्मनैव ॥⁴

"The passion itself arises in youth in damsels. In childhood the innocence is irremovable all the time. When the lotus plant blooms, it by itself comes to acquire the honey but if it were to be put by some body on the bud it would just flow down."

That the change of circumstances is responsible for some one being able to do a thing or not to do it is brought out by the poet very beautifully in the following verse :

अन्धकारमहनि प्रभाकरो

हन्तुमर्हति निशागमे न तु ।

1. Second act, p. 28.

2. Second act, p. 41.

3. Second act, p. 49.

4. First act, p. 8.

एवमेव विषयस्य भेदतो

भिन्नभिन्नजनयोग्यता स्मृता ॥¹

"The sun is able to remove the darkness in the day time only and not at the time of dusk. Similarly with the change in circumstances different people can accomplish different things."

One of the most remarkable verses from the poetic stand-point is the one quoted below :

जातः पर्वविधुर्विधुन्तुदभयान्मुक्त्वा कलङ्कं मुखं

भूते पङ्कुरुहः कुचौ च कलिके भीत्या हिमांशोः करात् ।

कान्तः किन्तु पिबेत्तादेव हि मुखं मर्द्वेत् करेणैव तौ

सर्वः क्लेशमुपैत्यदृष्टवशतो हन्तान्यजन्मन्यपि ।²

"The full moon has become the face of Sarojinī without the mark out of the fear of Rāhu. The buds of lotus have become her breasts out of the fear of rays (lit. the hand) of the moon. But the lover may still suck that very face, may press those very breasts. How strange ! on account of the turn of fate everybody comes to have trouble even in the next birth."

The author's language is quite often characterized by pleasant alliteration a few delightful illustrations of which are quoted below :

(क) अतुलना ललनासु सरोजिनी ।³

(ख) विचित्रेयं काचिल्ललितललनालापलहरी ।⁴

(ग) अविकलशशिकलाविमलाननायाः ।⁵

(घ) तस्मात् कन्दर्प दर्पं परिहर ।⁶

(ङ) ललितललनामिव लोचनचुम्बिनीम् ।⁷

The work contains a number of remarkable epigrammatic sayings which add a peculiar charm to it. A few of them are reproduced below :

(क) लक्ष्यनिक्षिप्तो हि शरः न प्रायेण प्रतिनिवर्तते ।⁸

(ख) दिननाथदर्शनं विना न भवति अरविन्दस्य विकासः ।⁹

1. Second act, p. 21

2. Second act, p. 33.

3. First act, p. 3.

4. First act, p. 10

5. Second act, p. 22.

6. Second act, p. 29

7. Second act, p. 50.

8. First act, p. 4.

9. First act, p. 7.

- (ग) अयस्कान्तनिकटात् किमन्तरा भवितुं पारयति लौहशलाका ।¹
 (घ) नहि खलु संयुज्यते सन्तप्तहेमशलाकाशीतलहेमदण्डः ।²
 (ङ) न खलु वारिप्रवाहस्तीरमेकतरमेव प्लावयते ।³
 (च) सत्येयं किल लोकवार्ता यत्रास्ति वृकभयं तत्रैवाविर्भवति विभावरी ।⁴
 (छ) परित्यजनसमये हि निर्माल्यस्य गन्धं गृह्णाति साधकः ।⁵
 (ज) सापत्यं नाम सीमन्तिनीनामनाशीविषविसृष्टमतस्वरूपञ्च महाविषम् ।⁶

1. First act, p. 13.
2. Second act, p. 22
3. Ibid.
4. Second act, p. 31
5. Second act, p. 30
6. Second act, P. 43.

Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam is written by Mathura Prasad Dikshit. Its hero Sudarśana is found described in detail in the Devī Bhāgavata (Third Skandha, chapters 14-25). This play deals with the importance of the devotion to Bhagavatī Durgā. It has six acts and is published by the author himself in the year 1954.

PLOT

First act—Two kings, Vīrasena of Kalinga and Yudhājit of Ujjayinī are in a fighting mood because both want the sons of their daughters to inherit the kingdom of their father Dhruvasandhi after his death. The eldest queen Manoramā, the daughter of Vīrasena, is the mother of Sudarśana. The second queen Līlāvati is the daughter of Yudhājit and mother of Śatrujit. Vīrasena wants that Sudarśana being the eldest should be proclaimed the king of Ayodhyā while Yudhājit presses the claim of his grandson for kingship. After an exchange of hot words they both invite each other to settle the question in the battlefield. While fighting Vīrasena, the father of Manoramā and grand father of Sudarśana, is killed. When Manoramā hears this she feels very much distressed because she knows that there would be no one to look after her son Sudarśana now. She weeps bitterly and cannot decide what to do. Meanwhile the minister Vidalla informs her that Yudhājit after killing Vīrasena is coming to kill her son also. So she should go to a safer place where she can save her son's life. Vidalla assures her that her son would be the king because Vasiṣṭha has predicted his kingship of Ayodhyā. Vidalla takes her to the āśrama of Bharadvāja. On the way thieves deprive them of all their ornaments and costly clothes. This breaks Manoramā's heart. To add to her miseries the spies of Yudhājit come enquiring after her. Vidalla says that he does not know anything about her. Manoramā has nothing to put on her person and as a result the spies cannot make out as to who she is. Vidalla safely takes her to the hermitage of Bharadvāja.

Second act—Manoramā and Sudarśana live peacefully in the hermitage of

Bharadvāja. After sometime Yudhājī's minister comes to the hermitage and tells Bharadvāja to hand over both Manoramā and her son. Bharadvāja refuses to do so. The haughty minister uses some harsh words against him. The sage remains calm as ever but says that they all would be destroyed soon. The king himself comes to the hermitage of the sage but the sage knowing his bad intentions refuses to send Manoramā and Sudarśana with him. Manoramā is very thankful to the sage because he has saved her and her son's life. Bharadvāja also assures her that Sudarśana will surely be the king of Ayodhyā.

One day in the morning while going to pay her respects to sage Bharadvāja along with Sudarśana Manoramā notices that Sudarśana is repeating some mantra. She informs the sage about this. The sage is very happy to know this and tells Manoramā that the mother Durgā has blessed Sudarśana with her mantra. The sage himself instructs him as to how he should proceed in the matter. After some time the other young pupils of Bharadvāja inform him that Sudarśana appears talking as it were to some invisible person. After a short while Sudarśana appears with bow and arrow. He tells the sage that Mother Durgā has herself given these things to him. She has also taught him how to use them.

Third act—Sudarśana is busy in worshipping Mother Durgā. Every one is happy to know that Mother Durgā makes her appearance before Sudarśana. One fine morning a carpenter comes with a beautiful chariot and wants to give it to Sudarśana. On being asked how he has come there the carpenter says that mother Durgā appeared before him in dream and ordered him to make the divine chariot and present it to prince Sudarśana. Sage Bharadvāja says that this is the indication that Sudarśana will shortly become the king of Ayodhyā, and be married to a princess.

Meanwhile in Vārāṇasī princess Śaśikalā has a dream that her would-be husband is living in the hermitage of Bharadvāja. She tells her friend all about her dream, viz., Mother Durga has herself appeared in her dream and while giving her hand into the hand of a beautiful man has proclaimed that he would be her husband. At the same time a thirsty Brāhmaṇa comes there and asks for water from Śaśikalā. Śaśikalā obliges him with it. The Brāhmaṇa is highly pleased and says that he has come from the hermitage of Bharadvāja. He tells her that there is a unique man there named Sudarśana. Śaśikalā is overjoyed to know that her dream would come out to be true. She sends a message to Sudarśana through her teacher Vasudeva. Sudarśana

too has the same type of dream. Mother Durgā instructs Sudarśana to go to Vārāṇasī and marry princess Śaśikalā. He relates the whole dream to his mother and Bharadvāja. The sage is very happy to know this and proclaims that now it would not take him long to be the king of Ayodhyā. At that very time the Brāhmaṇa brings the letter of Śaśikalā saying that she has chosen him her husband. The father of princess Śaśikalā has arranged for her Svayaṃvara. Sage Bharadvāja blesses Sudarśana saying that he should attend the Svayaṃvara.

Fourth act—Many kings along with Yudhājit and Śatrujit have assembled in the Svayaṃvara ceremony of princess Śaśikalā. When Yudhājit comes to know that Sudarśana has also arrived there and the princess is inclined towards him, he becomes furious and proclaims that if Śaśikalā selects him as her husband he would kill Sudarśana and carry away Śaśikalā. Other kings oppose his evil design but he is adamant. Śaśikalā chooses Sudarśana as her husband.

Fifth act—Hearing this Yudhājit is ready for the fight. But due to the power of Mother Durgā and the divine chariot, Sudarśana is able to defeat him. Jagadambā herself kills Yudhājit and Śatrujit in the battlefield and appears before Sudarśana and the king of Vārāṇasī and blesses them.

Sixth act—Sudarśana after marrying Śaśikalā and killing Yudhājit has reached the hermitage of sage Bharadvāja to pay obeisance to him and to his mother. Bharadvāja blesses the prince and tells him to go to Ayodhyā and rule over there. Sudarśana with his mother Manoramā and wife Śaśikalā leaves for Ayodhyā. There he meets his step mother Līlāvatī who blesses him and loves him like her own son. After some time Bharadvāja comes with the king of Punjab. Both are very happy to see the prosperity of his kingdom. They also join the festival of Jagadambā and after blessing Sudarśana go to their own places. With this the drama ends.

CHARACTERIZATION

Sudarśana—He is a great devotee of the Mother Goddess, a real *bhakta*. It is on account of the favour of the Mother only that he is able to defeat the entire army of Yudhājit singlehanded. His humility, truthfulness, bravery and heroism win him the favour of the Mother which ultimately wins him his kingdom. In the Svayaṃvara of Śaśikalā Sudarśana goes all by himself. His arch enemy Yudhājit greatly angered by his presence there threatens him with dire consequences. He tells him that he (Sudarśana) would be

made a short shrift of in the battle. Sudarśana, however, remains undaunted and gives a befitting reply to his enemy :

रणाङ्गणगताः शूरा दर्शयन्ति स्वपौरुषम् ।

कातरास्तु सदैवैवं बलान्ति रणविद्रुताः ॥¹

"The brave people in the battlefield show their mettle while the cowards having run away from the battlefield always boast in this way."

At every step Sudarśana's great devotion to the Mother Goddess becomes manifest. He has the firm belief that even if a mighty army were to be poised against him he would be able to give it a crushing defeat due to the favour of the Mother :

एकेनैव हता निशाचरचमू रामेण घोरे वने

सङ्ग्रामे खरदूषणप्रभृतयः किन्ति श्रुताः पातिताः ।

एकोऽहं रणसङ्गतानरिमृगान् हन्तुं क्षमः सिंहवत्

माशंसे जगदम्बिकाचरणयोरेकां कृपां सद्बलम् ॥²

"Rāma killed single-handed the whole demon army in the terrible forest. Have not you heard that he alone killed Khara and Dūṣaṇa etc. in the battlefield ? I alone am capable of killing the enemies gathered in battle like the lion the deer. I desire the only strength for me, the favour of the feet of Jagadambikā."

He is also so much devoted to Bharadvāja that when the kingdom is offered to him he does not like his separation from him and says :

किं कुर्याम् ? भवच्चरणयोरनुलग्नं मनो नापसर्पति । यदि भवानाज्ञापयति तर्हि इह स्थित एव राज्यप्रबन्धं कुर्याम् ।³

"What should I do ? My mind devoted to your feet does not get away from them. If you permit, I may carry on the administration from here itself."

When however the sage does not agree he goes to the kingdom and shows himself to be the most just and kind-hearted ruler. He asks his minister to so arrange the things :

द्वाराण्युदुषाद्य लोकाः समुदमिह समे निर्विशङ्कं स्वपन्तु

द्रव्याण्यारक्षयन्तः प्रतिपथमखिलाः पुरुषाः सञ्चरन्तु ।

1. Fourth act, p. 63.

2. Sixth act, p. 85.

3. Sixth act, p. 87.

दुःखं कस्यापि न स्यात् पणभवनमपि क्वापि राज्ये न तिष्ठेत्
उत्कोचं नैव कश्चिद् व्रजतु कृतिविधौ सर्वराज्ये सुखं स्यात् ॥¹

"Let the people sleep happily without any anxiety, keeping their doors open; let the watchmen keep watch on every path protecting wealth; let no unhappiness come to anybody; let there be no gambling den in the kingdom; let nobody offer bribe for having something done for him; let happiness reign in the whole kingdom."

Sudarśana would not permit any injustice in his kingdom; no oppression of the weak by the strong :

न च प्रजास्वनाचारो मम राज्ये भवेत्कवचित् ।

सबलो निर्बलं वापि न बाधेत कथंचन ॥²

"Let there be no transgression of morality in my subjects living in my kingdom anywhere, nor should the strong oppress the weak in anyway, *Śasikalā*—She appears in the play only for a short while. She has a dream wherein she finds her hand being offered by Jagadambā Herself into that of Sudarśana. Since that time she makes up her mind to marry Sudarśana alone. She declines to go to the Svayamvaramaṇḍapa too. Says she :

नाहं स्वयंवरे गमिष्यामि, यो वृतः स वृत एव ।³

"I will not go for Svayamvara. Whomsoever I have chosen I have chosen."

Her firm resolve for Sudarśana impresses her mother too who was earlier persuading her to go to the Svayamvara. Says she :

साधु, साधु. उत्तिष्ठ वत्से ! मा रोदीः । अद्यैव सुदर्शनेन सह ते पाणिग्रहणं सम्पादयिष्ये ।⁴

"Well, well, don't cry my dear child. To-day itself I will marry you to Sudarśana."

Bharadvāja—He is the friend, guide and philosopher for Manoramā and Sudarśana. He offers protection to the mother and the son even at the risk to himself. He is kind-hearted for the afflicted but very firm for the oppressors. He plainly tells the minister of Yudhājit to go back. He warns him of dire consequences when he threatens him :

अतिश्वीं वृत्तिमाश्रित्य गर्वोऽयं क्रियते कथम् ।

विश्वामित्रो वशिष्ठश्च मूढ किं न त्वया श्रुतौ ।⁵

1. Sixth act, p. 90.

2. Sixth act, p. 91.

3. Fourth act, p. 64.

4. Fourth act, p. 65.

5. Second act, P. 22.

"Why should you be so haughty adopting the ways more lowly than those of even a dog ? Have not you heard of Viśvāmitra and Viśiṣṭha O fool ?"

He refuses to hand over Manoramā and Sudarśana to him and tells him with an air of finality :

गच्छ यद् विधातव्यं तद् विधेहि । अहं सन्नद्धोऽस्मि ।¹

"Go and do whatever you like. I am ready,"

He directs the activities of Sudarśana at every step. It is he who asks him to go to Kashi and attend the Svayamvara of Śaśikalā, the daughter of the ruler of Kashi. Again, towards the end it is he who successfully persuades Sudarśana to get back to his kingdom and govern it according to the highest principles of Indian morality.

Yudhājit—He plays a villain in the play. He kills Sudarśana's father and tries to capture Sudarśana and Manoramā on the occasion of the Svayamvara of Śaśikalā where he along with other kings has come. Sudarśana inflicts on him a crushing defeat and is able to recover his lost kingdom.

1. Second act, P. 23.

Bhūbhāroddharaṇam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Bhūbhāroddharaṇam is written by Mathura Prasad Dikshit. It is based on a Mahābhārata episode. It is divided into five acts and is published by the author himself in 1960. It is a tragedy in contravention of the rules of Bharata and others.

PLOT

First act—It opens after Nāndī. The Sūtradhārā and Naṭī are shown conversing with each other. Naṭī has her doubts about the audience appreciating a tragedy but the Sūtradhārā tells that the author limits himself to the narration of known facts; he cannot be held responsible for what they lead to. It is immaterial if his composition is a comedy or a tragedy. After this Kṛṣṇa appears on the stage. Gāndhārī has cursed Kṛṣṇa's family that the whole of it would perish in a single day. Kṛṣṇa hears the cries of the earth. He thinks that the earth is now trembling under the sins of the Yādavas and their end is drawing near.

Then enter two brothers Raukmiṇeya and Sāmba playing tennis. They are informed by an elderly Yādava that their father has invited an omniscient sage. Raukmiṇeya and Sāmba want to test his knowledge. Sāmba puts on the dress of a woman and by placing a big cloth and an iron plate on his belly tries to pose a pregnant woman. Raukmiṇeya covers him from all sides and takes him to the sage to enquire as to whether he would give birth to a boy or a girl. The sage flies into rage on seeing him and says that he would deliver that thing which would make the whole family of the Yādavas perish. They all return from that place disgusted. The elderly Yādava is very much upset when he comes to know of all that has happened.

Second act—Nārada is going to meet Kṛṣṇa. On the way the same elderly Yādava informs him that the two boys, eager to test the knowledge of the sage Durvāsas have enraged him by their behaviour. Nārada is also very much worried to hear the whole story. He goes to Kṛṣṇa and asks him about the whole incident. Kṛṣṇa tells him that what is destined must surely happen. Nārada asks Kṛṣṇa as to why he is feeling so sad. Kṛṣṇa tells him

that Aniruddha is missing since long and there is no news of him up till now. Nārada informs him that Aniruddha is safe in the house of Vāṇāsura. Kṛṣṇa is very much surprised at this. He cannot make out as to how Aniruddha could be there. Nārada explains the whole thing to him and says that Usha, the daughter of Vāṇāsura has fallen in love with Aniruddha. That is why her father has kidnapped him to his place. Vāṇāsura is a great warrior and a devotee of Śiva. That is why he has become powerful. Kṛṣṇa is happy at the good news about Aniruddha but is terribly angry with Vāṇāsura who has kidnapped him. He prepares for war against him. Vāṇāsura and Kṛṣṇa have terrible fight. At last Vāṇāsura is defeated and says that he will send Aniruddha with his newly wedded wife Usha to Dvārakā and will meet his grandmother Rukmīṇī there.

Third act—Raukmiṇeya and Sāmba exchange hot words with Sātyaki in the very presence of Kṛṣṇa. Their war of words soon leads them to use weapons against each other. Kṛṣṇa thinks that the moment for destruction has arrived but their fight is abruptly ended by the call of their mother. Kṛṣṇa also, asks them not to fight. Meanwhile Nārada tells Kṛṣṇa that an astrologer has predicted that Dvārakā will be submerged under water after a week. So it is better, suggests he, if all the women and children are sent to a safe place like Indraprastha. Arjuna undertakes to escort them. Nārada expresses his doubt about Arjuna's capacity to provide them with the necessary escort. But Arjuna is proud of his Gāṇḍīva which he says is enough to deal with everybody. None dare harm him as long as he has his Gāṇḍīva with him. After this we have a few lighter moments when the Vidūṣaka too offers himself for the services of the women and children. He says that he will accompany Arjuna and when the queens require water he will bring that for them.

Fourth act—Arjuna leaves for Indraprastha with all the women and children of Dvārakā. On the way dacoits relieve the queens of all their ornaments. To his utter surprise and discomfiture Arjuna's Gāṇḍīva does not work and is snatched away by the dacoits at which he becomes totally helpless. He is very sad at this. Meanwhile Nārada appears there and consoles Arjuna. Arjuna tells Nārada that until now he was very proud of his bravery and Gāṇḍīva but now he has come to realize that all his power and for that matter all the power of Gāṇḍīva was due to Kṛṣṇa alone. He has now shed off his pride and conceit. Kṛṣṇa has given him a lesson through this incident. Nārada tells Arjuna that he should return to Indraprastha.

On the other hand the whole city of Dvārakā is about to be merged in water. Kṛṣṇa asks Sāmba to tell the citizens to vacate the city.

Fifth act—In the fifth act Kṛṣṇa instructs the people about Yoga. As a result their ignorance vanishes and they feel uplifted. On the other hand Sātyaki, Sāmba and Raukmiṇeya fight with one another, and perish. Kṛṣṇa broods over the extinction of his family and feels sad. He lies under a tree with a foot tucked on his leg. A hunter from a distance notices the eye-like sign on it (foot) and mistakes it for a deer's eye. He strikes it with his deadly arrow. But when he comes near he realizes his mistake. He is filled with remorse for what he has done and apologizes to Kṛṣṇa who affectionately tells him that it was not his fault. When he appeared in this world as Rāma he had killed Vālin from behind the trees. Now that very Vālin in his form has avenged that murder. He asks him to make good his escape in the forest lest Balarāma who is coming hither should kill him. After sometime Balarāma comes there and asks Kṛṣṇa as to who injured him. Kṛṣṇa tells him the whole story. Balarāma is furious and wants to kill the man who injured Kṛṣṇa but Kṛṣṇa pacifies him. Balarāma wants to end his life by throwing himself into the sea before Kṛṣṇa's death. After the destruction is complete Nārada appears on the scene and utters the Bhara-tavākya with which the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Kṛṣṇa—Arjuna and Nārada are the well known characters of this play.

Kṛṣṇa is a powerful king no doubt but his own sons and grandsons disregard him and in spite of his dissuasion they go on fighting with each other. Kṛṣṇa knows that the end of his family is drawing near. That is why he takes all the events with a philosophic calm. Even the hunter who injures him is forgiven by him.

Arjuna—is proud of his bravery and Gāṇḍīva but he does not know that the time has come when all his power would depart from him. A great warrior once he is badly treated by the dacoits and is even deprived of his Gāṇḍīva. It is at this time that he realizes that all his power was given by Kṛṣṇa and that left to himself he is powerless.

Nārada—is a typical character. He is to be found everywhere and knows each and every thing. He carries all types of messages to all the four corners of the earth.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Out of the two mythological plays of the author, the Bhūbhāroddhara-

nam, as pointed out earlier is a tragedy. To the doubts about the tragedy attracting the audience :

मारिषः—महाराज ! सर्वं सज्जीकृतम्, भरतमुन्यनुक्तत्वात् दुःखान्तमिदं नाटकमिति विरोधिन उद्दण्डं कयिष्यन्ति ।¹

"Māriṣa—My Lord ! Everything is ready but on account of the non-mention of tragedy by Bharata, our opponents may criticize it."

the Stage Manager replies :

दुःखान्तं वा सुखान्तं वा नाटकं रचयन् कविः ।

तन्मात्रे ऐतिहासेन नैव वाच्यत्वमेष्यति ॥²

"A poet writing a tragedy or comedy will have no blame coming to him if he confines himself to mere statement of facts."

The author has incorporated into his work some popular words of English too, as for example, badminton³ and tennis⁴, Occasionally he Sanskritizes them, as for example, English photo becomes स्फोट⁵ at his hands.

Out of the two plays the Bhūbhāroddharaṇam has quite a few beautiful philosophical sayings. When the hunter injures Kṛṣṇa with his arrow and later discovers his mistake he feels apologetic. Kṛṣṇa then consoles him by saying :

ईशो भवेदनीशो वा सर्वो भुङ्क्ते स्वनिर्मितम् ।

निहन्तूय यत्कृतं पूर्वं तत्तथा प्रतिशोधितम् ॥⁶

"Whether great or small every one reaps the fruit of his actions. I have reaped the reward in this birth of what I did in my previous birth by hiding myself behind the tree.

Kṛṣṇa here propounds the inexorableness of the law of Karma. Apart from these sporadic utterances there is a detailed philosophic discussion in this play (the Bhūbhāroddharaṇam) in the beginning of the fifth act. It is not clear as to what the author aimed at by introducing the high philosophy there. The scene laid there seems to have no significance so far as the drama is concerned though it very well brings out the author's grasp of some

1. First act, p. 2

2. Ibid., p. 2.

3. Ibid., p. 2.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. Second act, p. 10.

6. Fifth act, P. 26.

of the fundamental problems of Indian philosophy. While speaking of creation the author gives the fourfold division of the living beings—Jarāyuja, andaja, svedaja and udbhijja.¹ He further divides them into five on the basis of the number of their functionary organs. He says that the beings get separated from Brahman as do the sparks from fire, enter into the body constituted of the five actions which bind them. Freedom from (the miseries) of the world is possible in two ways either by Yoga which means the control of the mind (*cittavṛttinirodha*)² that would automatically (*svata eva*) lead a being to realize the *nirvikalpa* Ātman which is non-distinct from Brahman and by the performance of the actions without attachment. Yogins too are divided into two, the *yuktas* and the *yuñjānas*, the former being the ones to whom the entire creation appears crystal clear and the latter being the ones whose true knowledge is coloured by the knowledge of the other knowable objects. The non-attachment to actions is illustrated by an interesting episode from Janaka's life. Once he (Janaka) got tasty meals prepared for Nārada and had a snake installed on it which looked as if it was about to emit poison. After the meals Janaka enquired of Nārada about the quality of the meals. To this Nārada replied that due to the fear of food poisoning he could not know it. Janaka smiled and said "I too perform actions in this way (*aham-apyevam eva karmāṇi karomi*). After narrating this Kṛṣṇa utters the following śloka which sums up his philosophy :

मयाऽप्येवं विधीयन्ते कर्माणि सकलान्यपि ।

न मे तेषु स्पृहालेशो न मां तानि स्पृशन्त्यपि ॥³

"I too perform all actions in this way. I do not have even an iota of attachment to them, nor do they have any effect on me."

After this discourse all those present in the assembly feel uplifted. They all say, like Arjuna in the Gītā, that their ignorance is dispelled :

गतोऽस्माकं मोहः (cp. Gītā—नष्टो मोहः)

As said above, this discourse, though useful, has no dramatic significance. The mention of Vasudeva and Nanda going to heaven (वसुदेवनन्दौ स्वर्गं गच्छतः) coming close on the heels of गतोऽस्माकं मोहः⁴ looks too abrupt. The author should have adopted a more rational device to tell us

1. Ibid., p. 23.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p. 24.

4. Ibid.

of the death of the two. Further, the description of a fray among Sātyaki, Sāmba and Raukmiṇeya etc. immediately after they had all said *gato 'smākaṃ mohah* looks odd though justification for it may be sought in the inexorableness of the curse of Durvāsas which could turn even some of the very best minds into brutes.

About the author's other play, the Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam, we cannot help remarking that though possessing cohesion it is too blatantly propagandist to cause a little bit of aversion to the modern critic. The whole play revolves round the devotion to Jagadambā. So far so good. But too much recourse to *stotras* in praise of the goddess and too much of recourse to devices which would project her into the play do take away a little bit of stage-effect from the play. The playwright should have depended more on the events, how they unfold themselves for creating effect rather than clichés which are time-worn and have become antiquated now. Perhaps the devotee in the playwright is irresistible and forces himself into the open a trifle too often.

The works are full of misprints some of which are pretty bad, as for example : *evameva pratīyate, āgataḥ paryavasānam asya*¹ where the *visarga* in place of the *anusvāra* in *āgataḥ* changes the complexion of the sentence and makes it look atrocious.

Even apart from printing errors there are found in them some other errors too. In the expression *āgacchatu āgacchatu Arjuna*² the use of the third person in *āgacchatu* or the vocative in *Arjuna* is not proper. It should either have been *āgaccha āgaccha Arjuna* or *āgacchatu āgacchatu Arjunah*. The use of *acikatha*³ too is irregular, the *sanvadbhāva* to it being clearly barred by Pāṇ. *nāglopiśāsṛditām*.

It will not be out of point to mention here one other defect in the writing of the author. It is superfluity and redundancy. As instances we may mention the following :

In साकेते स्थापयित्वा तव तनयमिमं रक्षयिष्यत्यज्ञम्⁴ the causal suffix in *rakṣayiṣyati* is unnecessary. The idea is that Jagadambā will protect

1. Ibid., p 25.

2. Third act, p. 16.

3. Ibid.

4. Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam, Second act, p. 29.

Sudarśana. The simple *rakṣiṣyati* would have done here. The causal suffix here does not serve any useful purpose. Again in

निरालम्बेऽपि वदति प्रणौति स्तौति मातरम्¹

out of *prāṇauti* and *stauti* any one would have done, for both mean the same thing. If, however, the idea here is that of *namaskāra* and *stuti* then *prāṇamati* should have been used in place, of *prāṇauti* for *prāṇauti* formed from *nu* 'to praise', would not ordinarily yield the sense of bowing. Again in

अग्निं तर्पय कन्दमूलकफलं भुक्त्वाऽऽत्मतोषं वहेः²

and

शिष्यकगणैर्युक्तो निबद्धः क्षिती³

ka is not only unnecessary but confusing too. To use the word *mūlaka* when the idea is simply that of *mūla* is highly confusing. *Mūlaka* is the name of a kind of vegetable. Similarly *ka* in *śiṣyakagaṇa* is added unnecessarily possibly on account of the exigencies of metre. *Ka* can easily yield the sense of group (*samūha*) and if it is taken in that sense *gaṇa* with it would be unnecessary. If it is just a padding then it does little credit to the poet in the writer.

The author has also the tendency to reproduce the actual lines from the earlier works such as :

धिग् बलं क्षत्रियबलं ब्रह्मतेजो बलं बलम् ।⁴

or to take their sense and express it in his own words, as for example,

ये चात्मघातिनो लोकास्ते लोके तमसावृते ।

अनन्तकालं तिष्ठन्ति ।⁵

which cannot but remind us of the Upaniṣadic line :

असूर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।

तानेव सर्वे ते यान्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥⁶

Or to adopt the older lines :

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग् भवेत्

and to fit them into a verse of his own creation :

1. Bhaktasudarśanaṇṭakam, Second act, p. 34.
2. Ibid., p. 21.
3. Ibid.
4. Bhubhāroddharaṇam, Third act, p. 18.
5. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 21.
6. Iṣopaniṣad.

सव भवन्तु सुखिनो मा दुःखं कस्यचिद् भवेत् ।

नैव दुःखं जगन्मातुः कृपातः क्वापि जायते ॥¹

Or to paraphrase the older line, as for example :

विनाशे मतिरेति विक्रियाम्²

which is merely a paraphrase of

विनाशकाले विपरीतबुद्धिः ।

Occasionally the author also resorts to the use of such Sanskrit words and expressions as are nearer Hindi, as for example, *tapā*³ for Hindi *tavā*, *kīrtanam vidadhānah*⁴ for Hindi कीर्तन करता हुआ । पणभवन्⁵ for Hindi जुआघर । सुदर्शनकरेण मे करं सममेलयत्⁶ for Hindi सुदर्शन के हाथ से मेरा हाथ मिला दिया ।

Before we conclude our critique on the plays of the author we cannot but take note of the use of Hindi by the Vidūṣaka in the Bhūbhāroddharaṇam. Probably the author believes that Prakrit has outlived its utility and therefore must either be given up or replaced by modern vernaculars. This is a break from the past, a very important break of course, which would bring Sanskrit drama nearer the common people.

1. Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam, Sixth act, p. 96.
2. Ibid., Second act, p. 23.
3. Bhūbhāroddharaṇam, First act, p. 4.
4. Bhaktasudarśananāṭakam, Third act, p. 36.
5. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 90.
6. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 65.

Kautsasya gurudakṣiṇā

INTRODUCTORY

This one act play is written by Vasudeva Dwivedi. Though the theme is old still its presentation is new and original. The aim of the author is to give an idea to modern society of the type of relation that existed between the teacher and the taught in ancient society. The plot of the play is taken from the Raghuvamśa's fifth act. The story pertains to the sage Varatantu and his pupil Kautsa.

PLOT

First scene—In the hermitage of sage Varatantu, Kautsa is preparing to leave for his home after finishing his education. He wants to give something to his teacher as final fee, *dakṣiṇā*. His teacher Varatantu is very much pleased with his extraordinary talents and loves him very dearly. He tells Kautsa that he need not give anything to him but Kautsa's too much insistence infuriates him (Varatantu) who then demands a heavy sum. He asks Kautsa to bring fourteen crores of *mudrās*. Kautsa is astonished to hear this demand but true to his word he proceeds to fulfil this demand of his teacher. He goes to king Raghu because he knows that only he can fulfil his demand.

Second scene—King Raghu is sitting with his Guru Vasiṣṭha, ministers and counsellors in his assembly. He asks permission from his Guru to give in charity his whole kingdom and everything which he possesses. Vasiṣṭha agrees to it. The king orders that all his treasures should be given in alms. He even gives away his golden pot and keeps for himself only an earthen one. Just at that time Kautsa reaches there but when he sees only an earthen pot in the hands of Raghu he is very much disappointed. The king welcomes him and asks the purpose of his visit. At first Kautsa does not disclose it but when the king persists he tells him the whole story. The king assures him that his wish would be fulfilled. He has only to wait for two days in the Yajñaśālā. Kautsa is very happy to hear this. He goes to the Yajñaśālā. King Raghu orders his army to prepare for an attack on Alakāpurī, the capital of Kubera, from where he hopes to procure huge wealth to fulfil the requirement of Kautsa.

Third scene—The army is ready for attack. The minister comes and informs the king that they should proceed forward. Just at that time the treasurer comes and informs the king that the empty treasury has suddenly become full of gold. All are very happy and astonished at this extraordinary happening. The king orders that the whole treasure should be given to Kautsa but Kautsa takes only fourteen crores of *mudrās* and leaves that place praying that he (the king) be blessed with a son. He (Kautsa) proceeds towards the hermitage of Varatantu to offer him *dakṣiṇā*.

Fourth scene—The sage is repenting for what he has done with his beloved pupil. He thinks himself to be responsible for the hardships the youngster (Kautsa) may be suffering to procure the money. Meanwhile some students of the hermitage inform the sage that Kautsa is coming towards the hermitage. Varatantu is happy to learn this and eagerly waits for him. Kautsa comes, offers the fourteen crores of *mudrās* and relates to him all that happened at the palace of Raghu. Varatantu is very much pleased to hear the whole story and asks Kautsa to enter into the second stage of life i. e. the *gṛhasthāśrama*. He blesses him and utters his good wishes in the form of the *Bharatavākya*

CHARACTERIZATION

As is obvious from the title itself the drama is connected with the life of Kautsa. The theme of the drama circles round the most important incident of his life. We learn from it that full dedication and complete obedience pays much in life. He (Kautsa) is the most beloved and talented pupil of his teacher. The king wants to bestow upon him the money and that he is the rightful owner of the whole treasure but Kautsa is a true Brahmacārin. He refuses to take even a penny more than what he requires :

कौत्सः—महाराज ! नहि मे अधिकस्य धनस्य प्रयोजनं किमपि । विद्या तपस्स्याग एव च
अस्माकं ब्राह्मणानां प्रधानं धनम् । अहं तु केवलं गुरुदक्षिणायै चतुर्दशकोटीः
स्वर्णमुद्रा एव आनेतुं समागतोऽस्मि । ततोऽधिकम् एकामपि मुद्रां ग्रहीतुमस-
मर्थोऽस्मि ।¹

"Kautsa—My Lord, I have nothing to do with more wealth. Learning, penance and renunciation are the real wealth of us, the Brāhmaṇas. I have come only to get the fourteen crores of gold *mudrās* to offer to my teacher as fee (*dakṣiṇā*). I am unable to take even a single *mudrā* more than that."

In these days when the bonds of love between the teacher and the

pupil are loosening and there is indiscipline among students the present drama is a welcome attempt to put the whole thing in proper perspective by retelling in simple words the age-old story of Kautsa and Varatantu which presents before us the highest and the noblest ideal of student-teacher relationship in ancient India.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

This is a small play of only twelve pages and as a piece of literature has little merit in it. For its verses it depends upon the Raghuvamśa. The prose portion seems to serve merely the purpose of introducing them. In this way it (the play) is reduced to a mere running commentary on the Kālidāsan verses. The play tells the story of Varatantu and Kautsa in rather a prosaic way. The prose, the author's contribution, does not have the classical ring about it. The influence of Hindi on it is unmistakable, e, g. nahi iyaṃ haṭhavādītā śobhate tubhyam¹. Occasionally grammatically incorrect forms too are found, as for example, the forms mṛṇmaya² where the cerebralization of the dental *n* is uncalled for, anugrhītavyaḥ³ where the *Samprasāraṇa* is not possible, priyasakhā⁴ where the *samāsānta* ṭac enjoined by Pāṇ. 'rājāhaṣsakhībhyāḥ ṭac' is avoided. The very expression ekāṅki nāṭakam⁵ though very popular in Hindi is certainly not tenable in Sanskrit. It should be ekāṅkaṃ nāṭakam.

In the beginning of the work the playwright gives us a simile which is refreshingly modern :

अथ च पथिकानां यथा धूमशकटे तथा दर्शकानां नाटके क्रियमाणो विलम्बः नितान्तम-
सहनीयो भवति ।⁶

"Just as the passengers become impatient of the delay of a train similarly the audience too becomes highly impatient of the delay in the presentation of a play."

The motive which inspired the playwright to go in for the present play has been very beautifully and succinctly put forth by him in the form of the *Bharatavākya* :

1. P. 4.
2. P. 7.
3. P. 3.
4. P. 11.
5. P. 2.
6. Ibid.

आदेशकारिणः शिष्या गुरवः शिष्यवत्सलाः ।

स्नातकाः सच्चरित्राश्च सन्तु सर्वत्र भारते ॥¹

"May there be everywhere in India pupils who are obedient, teachers who love their pupils and graduates who have good character."

Chāyāśākuntalam

INTRODUCTORY

The play 'Chāyāśākuntalam' is written by J. T. Parikh of M. T. B. College, Surat. It is one act play consisting of 25 pages. The author has published the book himself in 1957.

It seems that the author is inspired by the third and the fourth acts of the Uttaraṛāmacarita of Bhavabhūti when he introduces the shadow of Śākuntalā in his play. Both Sītā and Śākuntalā suffered alike in their life. The only difference is that while the separation of Rāma and Sītā was permanent, the separation of Duṣyanta and Śākuntalā was temporary; both were reunited after a time.

Though the present play has an old theme, the author has presented it in a new way. In essentials the story is the same but the author has introduced some pleasant innovations in details. He has placed Śākuntalā on a higher moral plane. He has made Duṣyanta more sublime and guilt-conscious. Above all, he has united them at that place where there was no possibility of their union.

PLOT

Nymph Sānumatī, the friend of Menakā (mother of Śākuntalā) comes to know that Duṣyanta is returning after defeating the Asuras at the instance of Indra. She believes that he will surely halt for a short-while in the hermitage of Kaṇva. She then thinks: 'Why not take Śākuntalā to the hermitage where she can have a glimpse of her husband?'. She discloses this desire of hers to Mārīca. Mārīca happily agrees and bestows upon her the power of being invisible so that Śākuntalā might be able to see everyone but nobody will be able to see her.

Sānumatī makes Śākuntalā invisible and brings her to the hermitage of Kaṇva. She is received cordially by the Āśramadevatā. All the inhabitants of the hermitage tell her that Mahārṣi Kaṇva has gone to Himagiri and Gautamī has followed him. Nobody wanted to stay in the hermitage after they heard the tragic story of Śākuntalā's banishment from the kingdom of Duṣyanta. Āśramadevatā asks Sānumatī as to what happened to Śākuntalā

when Duṣyanta repudiated her. Sānumatī tells her that (Śakuntalā's mother) Menakā appeared in the form of light and took Śakuntalā away to the hermitage of sage Mārīca. Up till now she is staying there and is blessed with a son who is five years old now.

Meanwhile, Duṣyanta enters the hermitage. He cries bitterly when he sees the same old places where he had met Śakuntalā for the first time. He is so sad that he falls into swoon while reviving old memories. Sānumatī asks Śakuntalā to touch Duṣyanta so that he may regain consciousness. Śakuntalā acts accordingly. Duṣyanta regains consciousness and starts lamenting again. At the same time Anasūya comes there. She shows him the old places and relates the incidents connected with his first encounter with Śakuntalā. Duṣyanta is miserable beyond limit when he hears about those incidents from the mouth of Anasūyā. He thinks himself guilty of an unforgivable blunder because when Śakuntalā herself reminded him about those incidents he thought them all made up and insulted her for being a treacherous lady. He tells Anasūyā that when he could not recognize Śakuntalā she was taken away by a form which was all light. After that he does not know anything about her whereabouts. At this moment Priyamvadā also comes. She tells them that all this tragic incident was the result of a curse which Durvāsas had pronounced on Śakuntalā while she was absorbed in the thoughts of Duṣyanta. Even Śakuntalā does not know anything about it (this curse). Priyamvadā further says that she requested the sage not to be so harsh on the innocent girl but he did not listen to her. He only told her that when the king would regain the ring only then would he remember the whole incident. Duṣyanta is so upset by this pathetic story that he falls into swoon once again. Śakuntalā again touches him and he regains. He takes leave of the two friends and apologizes for making them sad once again. Śakuntalā feels happy and sorrowful at the same time. She is happy because she has a glimpse of her husband. She is sad, because she has learnt that the whole tragedy of her life is the result of a curse. She then leaves for the hermitage of Mārīca with Sānumatī.

CHARACTERIZATION

Duṣyanta—Duṣyanta of 'Chāyāśākuntalam' is more pensive, thoughtful, repentent and guilt-conscious. The guilt which he could not confess openly in the palace as a king he confesses in the hermitage and he gives way to his emotions without any hesitation. There in the hermitage he is not a king but a common man who is free to lament his cruel fate. Thus says he :

अनेन भगवत्कण्वाश्रमस्य पुनर्दर्शनेन—

दिनान्येतानि गूढाचिह्नं दयेऽनुशयानलः ।

ज्वलन्दग्धेन्द्रियो मूर्च्छां तनोत्यद्य परां मम ॥¹

"At the sight once again of the hermitage of the sage Kanva—the fire of repentance with hidden flames, burning all these days, consuming my senses is completely stupefying me."

He has not forgotten the soft touch of his beloved wife even after the lapse of six years. When he falls into swoon Śakuntalā touches him. He at once recalls that soft touch and comes out with the following words :

सुधासारश्चन्द्रात्किमु मलयजन्मा नु बहुलः

सरोजैः सेको वा विहित इव निष्पन्दशिशिरः ।

प्रियापाणिस्पर्शश्चिरपरिचितो वा किमु मृदुः

कपोले मोहान्मां स्तिमितमपि संजीवयति यः ॥²

"(O what is this ?) Is it a shower of nectar from the moon or is it a thick sandal paste or is it a cool spray sprinkled as it were with lotuses or is it the long familiar soft touch of the hand of my beloved on my cheeks that has revived me from the stupor of my swoon."

There is no doubt that the softness of the touch is the same but when he cannot see Śakuntalā and the touch too is experienced for a short while then he cannot decide as to what it can be. He is perplexed and says:

स्वप्नः किमेष मतिविभ्रम एव किं वा

माया नु वा किमुत सत्यमिदं न जाने ।³

He thinks his experience may either be due to dream or mental confusion or hallucination.

He laments bitterly. He says that like a foolish man he insulted his wife when she herself came to him. Now how can he find her in the forest? It is like a cry in the wilderness:

स्वयं गेहे लक्ष्मीरिव समुपलब्धा तव पुन-

विमोहादासीद्वा किमपि हृदयं तत्र विरसम् ।

स्वयं त्यक्ता कान्ता तव कथमिदानीं तु सुलभा

विधौ कष्टं वामे विरम विरमारण्यरुदितात् ॥⁴

1. Verse 10, p. 6.

2. Verse 13, p. 8

3. Verse 15, P. 8.

4. Verse 17, p. 9.

when Duṣyanta repudiated her. Sānumatī tells her that (Śakuntalā's mother) Menakā appeared in the form of light and took Śakuntalā away to the hermitage of sage Mārīca. Up till now she is staying there and is blessed with a son who is five years old now.

Meanwhile, Duṣyanta enters the hermitage. He cries bitterly when he sees the same old places where he had met Śakuntalā for the first time. He is so sad that he falls into swoon while reviving old memories. Sānumatī asks Śakuntalā to touch Duṣyanta so that he may regain consciousness. Śakuntalā acts accordingly. Duṣyanta regains consciousness and starts lamenting again. At the same time Anasūya comes there. She shows him the old places and relates the incidents connected with his first encounter with Śakuntalā. Duṣyanta is miserable beyond limit when he hears about those incidents from the mouth of Anasūyā. He thinks himself guilty of an unforgivable blunder because when Śakuntalā herself reminded him about those incidents he thought them all made up and insulted her for being a treacherous lady. He tells Anasūyā that when he could not recognize Śakuntalā she was taken away by a form which was all light. After that he does not know anything about her whereabouts. At this moment Priyamvadā also comes. She tells them that all this tragic incident was the result of a curse which Durvāsas had pronounced on Śakuntalā while she was absorbed in the thoughts of Duṣyanta. Even Śakuntalā does not know anything about it (this curse). Priyamvadā further says that she requested the sage not to be so harsh on the innocent girl but he did not listen to her. He only told her that when the king would regain the ring only then would he remember the whole incident. Duṣyanta is so upset by this pathetic story that he falls into swoon once again. Śakuntalā again touches him and he regains. He takes leave of the two friends and apologizes for making them sad once again. Śakuntalā feels happy and sorrowful at the same time. She is happy because she has a glimpse of her husband. She is sad, because she has learnt that the whole tragedy of her life is the result of a curse. She then leaves for the hermitage of Mārīca with Sānumatī.

CHARACTERIZATION

Duṣyanta—Duṣyanta of 'Chāyāśākuntalam' is more pensive, thoughtful, repentent and guilt-conscious. The guilt which he could not confess openly in the palace as a king he confesses in the hermitage and he gives way to his emotions without any hesitation. There in the hermitage he is not a king but a common man who is free to lament his cruel fate. Thus says he :

अनेन भगवत्कण्वाश्रमस्य पुनर्दर्शनेन—

दिनान्येतानि गूढाचिह्नं दयेऽनुशयानलः ।

ज्वलन्दग्धेन्द्रियो मूर्च्छां तनोत्यद्य परां मम ॥¹

"At the sight once again of the hermitage of the sage Kanva—the fire of repentance with hidden flames, burning all these days, consuming my senses is completely stupefying me."

He has not forgotten the soft touch of his beloved wife even after the lapse of six years. When he falls into swoon Śakuntalā touches him. He at once recalls that soft touch and comes out with the following words :

सुधासारश्चन्द्रात्किमु मलयजन्मा नु बहुलः

सरोजैः सेको वा विहित इव निष्यन्दशिशिरः ।

प्रियापाणिस्पर्शश्चिरपरिचितो वा किमु मृदुः

कपोले मोहान्मां स्तिमितमपि संजीवयति यः ॥²

"(O what is this ?) Is it a shower of nectar from the moon or is it a thick sandal paste or is it a cool spray sprinkled as it were with lotuses or is it the long familiar soft touch of the hand of my beloved on my cheeks that has revived me from the stupor of my swoon."

There is no doubt that the softness of the touch is the same but when he cannot see Śakuntalā and the touch too is experienced for a short while then he cannot decide as to what it can be. He is perplexed and says:

स्वप्नः किमेष मतिविभ्रम एव किं वा

माया नु वा किमुत सत्यमिदं न जाने ।³

He thinks his experience may either be due to dream or mental confusion or hallucination.

He laments bitterly. He says that like a foolish man he insulted his wife when she herself came to him. Now how can he find her in the forest? It is like a cry in the wilderness:

स्वयं गेहे लक्ष्मीरिव समुपलब्धा तव पुन-

विमोहादासीद्वा किमपि हृदयं तत्र विरसम् ।

स्वयं त्यक्ता कान्ता तव कथमिदानीं तु सुलभा

विधौ कष्टं वामे विरम विरमारण्यरुदितात् ॥⁴

1. Verse 10, p. 6.

2. Verse 13, p. 8

3. Verse 15, P. 8.

4. Verse 17, p. 9.

"You recovered her like Lakṣmī herself in your house but your heart was somehow indifferent towards her on account of ignorance. The beloved was forsaken by your own self. How could she now be obtainable to you ? How sad ! When fate is adverse stop crying in the wilderness."

Anasūyā and Priyaṃvadā show him the places where he had his first taste of love with Śakuntalā. His heart breaks when he sees those places. That is why he says :

हा धिक् ! हृदयमर्मच्छिदोऽमी कथाप्रसंगा भविष्यन्ति ।¹

He Condemns himself by saying that while even the animals like deer believed Śakuntalā it was he who failed to believe her :

विश्वसनीया एते (हरिणकाः) । अहं पुनरविश्वासभूमिस्तदा शकुन्तलायाः ।²

"Yes, they (the deer) indeed trusted her. It was I who did not trust Śakuntalā."

Another sentence also reveals his agony about his slow-wittedness :

स्मारितोऽप्यस्य तदा शकुन्तलाया न स्मृतवानहं मन्दबुद्धिः ।³

"Though Śakuntalā tried to awaken my memory to that, yet, I was too dull-witted to remember it."

His love-stricken body has become pale all over. Anasūyā describes his pathetic condition aptly when she says :

मुखाब्जं संक्लिष्टं नयनयुगलं वाष्पलुलितं
कपोलौ प्रक्षामौ चिरविरहतापाद् धवलितौ ।
वपुश्चिन्ताग्लानं हृदयमनुतापेन मथितं
प्रिये कष्टापन्ने द्रवति हृदयं नैव सखि ते ॥⁴

"O my friend does not your heart melt when your husband is in distress ? His lotus like face is dismal, both of his eyes are full of tears; his cheeks are emaciated and pale on account of the heat of long separation; his body is attenuated due to grief; his heart is crushed by repentence. Śakuntalā—Śakuntalā when in the hermitage is blooming with youth but after repudiation is suffering from the pangs of separation. She is changed very much, still she retains her charm. The Āśramadevatā describes her in the following words :

1. P. 10

2. Ibid.

3. P. 11.

4. Verse 26, p. 13.

क्षामं शरीरं वदनं विवर्णं
 दीर्घेण शोकेन मनः सचिन्तम् ।
 तथाऽपि रम्याऽसि हिमैः समीरैः
 शीर्णैव हेमन्तसरोजलक्ष्मीः ॥¹

“(My child Śakuntalā, I have seen you after a long time) “Thou hast grown lank in body, sallow in face, and gloomy with long sorrow. Yet thou lookest comely though frayed like the bloom of the lotus blighted with winter (frost).”

Not only father Kanva and Gautamī had left the hermitage the deer also had forsaken it in the absence of Śakuntalā, Now when they see that she (Śakuntalā) has come they return to the hermitage without knowing that she (Śakuntalā) has come only for a short while :

शकुन्तलायाश्चिरविप्रयोगात्
 त्यक्त्वाऽऽश्रमं यानि वनं श्रितानि ।
 सारङ्गयूथानि निवृत्य सद्यो
 नृत्यन्ति संहृष्टमनांसि तानि ॥²

“The flocks of deer which had fled from the hermitage and resorted to the woods owing to their long separation from Śakuntalā have quickly returned and are leaping about with delight.”

Śakuntalā's heart sinks when she sees the deer dancing with joy, She utters the following words to herself in a feelingful tone :

शकुन्तला—हा धिक् शकुन्तले ईदृशोऽयं ते दैवदुर्विपाको यन्मृगा अपि तव कारणात्
 पीड्यन्ते । किं पुनराप्तवर्गः ॥³

“Śakuntalā—Alas! such is your ill-fate that even the deer are distressed on account of you, not to speak of the kith and kin.”

She herself is so much overpowered with emotion that she falls into swoon. She cannot believe that Duṣyanta still remembers her :

वृत्तस्य तस्य ननु पञ्च समा व्यतीताः
 कष्टं कथं स्मरसि सम्प्रति मामनाथाम् ॥⁴

“Alas! It is a long period of five years since that incident. How is it that thou rememberest a helpless creature like me.”

1. Verse 5 p. 4.
2. Verse 6. p. 4.
3. p. 5.
4. p. 5.

Though she loves Duṣyanta intensely, one thing pinches her very much. She cannot forgive him (Duṣyanta) for insulting her for nothing. When he falls into swoon Sānumatī asks her to go near him and touch him. Śakuntalā hesitates to do so and says :

नोत्सहे समीपं गन्तुमकारणपरित्यागिनः ।¹

"I have no heart to go near that man who forsook me without any reason,"

But when she comes to know from the words of Priyaṃvadā that what happened was due to the curse of Durvāsas, her anger melts away.

Anasūyā tells Duṣyanta about the she-deer who was pregnant, when he first visited the hermitage. Duṣyanta wants to see her young one. Śakuntalā herself is overpowered by the motherly feeling towards the young one and is at once reminded of her own son who has had no taste of fatherly affection. The following pathetic words give a peep into the working of her mind :

हा वत्स सर्वदमन ईदृशानि ते दुर्भाग्यानि यदतीतेऽप्यस्मिन्काले मन्दस्मितालक्ष्यदाडिमबीज-
रक्तकोमलदन्तावलि प्रत्यग्रसमुल्लसितकुवलयमृदुलं न चुम्बितं पित्रा तव वदनम् ॥²

"Sarvadamana, my child, such is thy bad luck that even after the lapse of so much of time thy father has not kissed thy face soft like a freshly blooming lotus with its red and soft row of teeth like the pomegranate seeds slightly visible because of gentle smile."

When Duṣyanta again becomes unconscious Śakuntalā once again wants to touch him. She cannot resist the desire of hers of being near him even in the presence of so many people. That is why she says:

स्पर्शानन्दस्य तीव्रेच्छा प्रियस्य वदनाम्बुजे ।

1. सन्निधावपि सर्वासां लज्जाहीनां करोति माम् ॥³

"The strong desire of getting the pleasure of touching the lotus like face of my love even in the presence of all prompts me to quit my modesty."

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The author has taken the story from the 'Abhijñāna-śākuntalam' of Kālidāsa but he has introduced his innovations too. He has shown Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā meeting again for a short while in the hermitage of Kaṇva and this time under completely changed circumstances and changed mental

1. p. 7

2. p. 12.

3. Verse 48, p. 23

attitudes. Duṣyanta cannot see Śakuntalā but Śakuntalā can see him and hear every word he utters. By this meeting one thing which was pinching the heart of Śakuntalā most (viz. her repudiation and insult) gets solved. Śakuntalā is completely a changed woman when she leaves the hermitage of Kanva after this short meeting with her husband. This original idea of J. T. Parikh has come out in the form of the play 'Chāyāśākuntalam'.

The play having the story of Śakuntalā as its theme the influence of Abhijñānaśākuntalam, the parent play, on its language was but natural.

The Chāyāśākuntalam verse

स्वप्नः किमेष मतिविभ्रम एव किं वा ।

माया नु वा किमुत सत्यमिदं न जाने ॥¹

is only a reflex of the Abhijñānaśākuntalam verse :

स्वप्नो नु माया नु मतिभ्रमो नु

क्लिष्टं नु तावत् फलमेव पुण्यम् ।

असंनिवृत्यै तदतीतमेते

मनोरथा नाम तदप्रपाताः ॥²

The Chāyāśākuntalam verse

निन्दन्ती सा स्वानि भाग्यानि बाला

बाहूक्षेपं मुक्तकण्ठं रुरोद ।³

is almost the same as the Abhijñānaśākuntalam verse :

सा निन्दन्ती स्वानि भाग्यानि बाला

बाहूक्षेपं क्रन्दितुं च प्रवृत्ता ॥⁴

The Chāyāśākuntalam verse :

अनन्यचित्तेन विचिन्तयन्ती

यमद्य पश्यस्यतिथिं न मां यत् ।

शृणु स्वधर्मचिरणात्प्रमत्ता

स्मरिष्यति त्वां न ततः स राजा ॥⁵

is merely a paraphrase of the Kālidāsan verse :

विचिन्तयन्ती यमनन्यमानसा

तपोधनं वेत्ति न मामुपस्थितम् ।

1. Verse 8, p. 6.

2. Sixth act, verse 10 p. 252, Abhijñānaśākuntalam (Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam).

3. p. 16

4. Fifth act, p. 224, Ibid.

5. p. 20.

स्मरिष्यति त्वां न स बोधितोऽपि स-

क्तथां प्रमत्तः प्रथमं कृतामिव ॥¹

In the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* both *Anasūyā* and *Priyamvadā* know about the curse of *Durvāsas*² but in the present play only *Priyamvadā* is shown to be in the know of it. The following conversation between *Anasūyā* and *Priyamvadā* would bear it out :

प्रियंवदा—मया च स वृत्तान्तोऽद्यावधि न कस्यचिदपि कथितः ।

अनसूया—मह्यमपि किमिति न कथितं त्वया ।

प्रियंवदा—शोकनिवर्तनायै तदाचरितम् ।³

The author is expert in drawing word pictures which describe human feelings.

The natural beauty comes out in all its charming colours from the pen of the author :

कुञ्जेषु मुग्धमधुपस्वनमञ्जुलेषु

पर्यन्तचारुकदलीतरुशीतलेषु ।

यत्र प्रियासहचरस्य निमेषकल्पा

ग्रीष्मे मम प्रणयिनो दिवसा व्यतीताः ॥⁴

"Where the summer days of me, the lover, in company with my beloved passed as if they were so many winks, in the bowers charming on account of the humming of the infatuated bees, and cool on account of the beautiful plantain trees on the borders,"

Below we give a verse which draws a vivid picture of *Śakuntalā*'s love-stricken body :

क्षामं शरीरं वदनं विवर्णं

दीर्घेण शोकेन मनः सचिन्तम् ।

तथाऽपि रम्याऽसि हिमैः समीरैः

शीर्णैव हेमन्तसरोजलक्ष्मीः ॥⁵

Simile is the author's favourite figure of speech a beautiful illustration of which is provided by the verse :

1. Fourth act, p. 148, Ibid.

2. Fourth act, p. 152, Ibid.

3. p. 21.

4. Verse 7, p. 5.

5. Verse 5 p. 4.

स्वयं पादक्षुण्णा शिशिरमणिमुक्तावलिरिव
 स्वयं प्रक्षिप्तेव ज्वलदनलमध्ये कमलिनी ।
 अनास्वाद्योत्सृष्टा स्वयमिव सुधा पङ्कनिकरे
 मयैवं त्यक्ता त्वं कथमसि सुलभ्या प्रियतमे ॥¹

"How could you be easily recoverable now when you were forsaken by my own self like a string of cool pearls and jewels trodden under the feet; like a lotus plant thrown into the burning fire; and like ambrosia thrown into a mass of mud without tasting it even."

The poet is very good in the depiction of the sentiment of pathos too. An example of it is given below :

अयं ते दौर्भाग्याच्चिरविरहतापेन सतत
 विवर्णं विभ्राणो लुलितमुखपद्मं प्रियतमः ।
 प्रमूढः स्रस्ताङ्गं लुंठति वरणीं लुप्तकरणः
 प्रिये कष्टापन्ने भवति न कथं तेऽपि कष्टाणां ॥²

"This your lover is bearing, as ill-luck would have it, a face resembling a withered lotus constantly pale on account of the heat of long separation and is in a swoon with the senses lost and rolling on the ground with his drooping limbs. How is it that you show no sympathy to him when he is so much distressed."

Among the other similes mention may be made of the one where the Āśramadevatā points to the charm of Śakuntalā "even though her face has become listless and her body emaciated very much like the beauty of the autumnal lotus marred by the chilly winds":

तथापि रम्यासि हिमैः समीरैः
 शीर्णैव हेमन्तसरोजलक्ष्मीः ।³

The simile is employed with a good effect to compare the knitting of the eye brows and side glances etc. of Śakuntalā with the deer — the deer instructing Śakuntalā in all these as it were:

भ्रूभङ्गलोचनकटाक्षविलोकितानां
 यैश्चापितः समुपदेश इव प्रियायै ।⁴

1. Verse 34, p. 17.

2. Verse 47, p. 23.

3. Verse 5, p. 4.

4. Verse 9, p. 6.

In one verse the touch of Śakuntalā is described like the moon and the soft fibres of the lotus stalk:

स्पर्शः स एव पुनरप्यमृतांशुकल्पः

शीतो मृणालमृदुतन्तुनिभः प्रियायाः ।¹

The whiteness of the hand of Śakuntalā is compared to the soft interior of the broken plantain tree :

स्पर्शः स एव नियतं कदलीविभङ्ग-

गर्भाद्रिङ्गोरकरपल्लवजः प्रियायाः ।²

The poet occasionally gives us prose in a high-flown style :

हा वत्स सर्वदमन 'ईदृशानि ते दुर्भाग्यानि यदतीतेष्वेतस्मिन् काले मन्दस्मितालक्ष्य-
दाडिमबीजरक्तकोमलदन्तावलि प्रत्यग्रसमुल्लसितकुवलयमृदुलं न चुम्बितं पित्रा तव वदनम् ।³

Every century has a particular code of morals. Certain things are expected from a particular character. Duṣyanta of the Mahābhārata could not accept Śakuntalā due to public censure. Kālidāsa had to invent the story of curse to save Duṣyanta from that censure. But modern age expects Duṣyanta to be fully repentant. The play 'Chāyāsākuntalam' fulfils this need of the present age.

1. Verse 49, p. 24.

2. Verse 14, p. 8.

3. p. 12.

Devayānī

INTRODUCTORY

The play Devayānī is published in the collection 'Maṇimañjarī' of the works of Bommakaṇṭi. It is the first in the series of Amara Bhāratī and is published in 1962, from Hyderabad. It is based on a Mahābhārata story and is divided into five scenes.

PLOT

First scene—Devayānī is the daughter of Śukrācārya, the teacher of Vṛṣaparvan, the king of the demons. Vṛṣaparvan has a daughter named Śarmiṣṭhā. Both Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā pick up a quarrel with each other and Śarmiṣṭhā throws Devayānī into the well. Devayānī cries for help. By chance Yayāti, a Kṣatriya king, passes that way. He had lost his way and is now roaming about here and there aimlessly. When he hears the cries of Devayānī he goes near the well and takes her out. Devayānī is furious at Śarmiṣṭhā and takes the pledge that she will avenge the insult. Devayānī is attracted towards Yayāti and wants to marry him but Yayāti does not think it proper. Devayānī sends her friend to bring her father Śukrācārya to that place so that he may have a talk with him (Yayāti) on this matter. *Second scene*—Yayāti has come for hunting in the forest and happens to see Devayānī for the second time along with Śarmiṣṭhā and her other friends. Śarmiṣṭhā is serving Devayānī. Yayāti is more attracted towards Śarmiṣṭhā. But in order to obey Śukrācārya he has to marry Devayānī. As decided earlier, Śarmiṣṭhā accompanies Devayānī to her husband's place as her maid-servant,

Third scene—King Yayāti, as said above, is more attracted towards Śarmiṣṭhā. He becomes sad when he sees that Śarmiṣṭhā has to stay there as a maid-servant. Once Yayāti and Śarmiṣṭhā meet in the garden in solitude. Both express their love to each other. The king promises that from now on she would not be treated as a servant. Both Yayāti and Śarmiṣṭhā become intimate and Śarmiṣṭhā gives birth to three sons.

Fourth scene—Devayānī is furious to know about the illegitimate relations of Yayāti with Śarmiṣṭhā. She points out to the three sons whom Śarmiṣṭhā

got from Yayāti. She proclaims that it is a sin to have relations with a woman other than one's wife. But Yayāti thinks that he has done the right thing. Devayānī is still more angry and tells Yayāti that she does not want to see his face again. She swears that she would avenge this insult.

Fifth scene—It is for this purpose that Devayānī orders the 'Śāpapurūṣa' (curse personified) to enter into the body of Yayāti and convert it (his body) into that of an old one. Śāpapurūṣa acts exactly as Devayānī says. When Yayāti awakens from his sleep he finds himself turned into an old man. He himself cannot recognize his own body. He laments his fate. With these lamentations the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Devayānī—She is a well known character in the Mahābhārata. She is the daughter of Śukrācārya, and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of king Vṛṣaparvan, is her maid-servant. Devayānī marries Yayāti on her own accord but Yayāti has softness for Śarmiṣṭhā. This enrages Devayānī. She is so furious that she curses even her husband. She is a Brāhmaṇa girl and has all the qualities which a girl of Brāhmaṇa family should possess.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The play Devayānī is written in an easy flowing style. The dialogues are well-written. Instead of the old *svagatam* of the Sanskrit dramas the author uses the modern *nīcaiḥ*. Another departure from the tradition is the showing of actual sneezing on the stage :

एतदपि विज्ञाप्यं यदहं स्त्रीभ्यो बिभेमि.....(क्षोति) ।¹

According to the rules of Sanskrit dramaturgy the actual showing of such scenes is prohibited.

At one place while describing the excellent physique of Yayāti the author comes out with a verse :

क एष पृथुलोरस्कः सुसंस्थानो महाभुजः ।

प्रांशुमूर्तिर्वीरवरः प्रह्लादयति मे मनः ॥²

which bears a clear impress of Kālidāsa's verse ;

व्यूढोरस्को वृषस्कन्धः शालप्रांशुर्महाभुजः ।³

1. P. 8.

2. P. 10

3. Raghuvamśa, Canto I, verse 13.

In the line

चारुस्मिते क्षिप्रमेहि उदयत्येष चन्द्रमाः¹

the sandhi between *ehi* and *udayati*, the words of the first and the second pāda, is avoided. It is impermissible.

The form *subhru*² in the vocative too is irregular. The *u* here could not be shortened.³

The influence of Hindi or other vernaculars too can be detected here and there. The line *āvayoh hṛdaye prathamam eva milite*⁴ is an instance in point. *Ghūrṇālakāḥ*⁵ meaning curly hair too is of the same type.

Here and there we meet with some good examples of alliteration too, as for instance,

(क) दारिका दर्पभूयिष्ठा शमिष्ठा नाम ।⁶

(ख) व्यपैतु शङ्का तव वर्णसङ्करे ।⁷

The play has a song too which is found in the beginning of the second scene. It has raciness in it and is quite pleasant.

The play singularly lacks in humour.

1. P. 13.

2. P. 5.

3. Vide the *Siddhāntakaumudī* : he *subhruḥ*, *katham tarhi hā pitah kvāsi he subhru* ? *pramāda evāyam iti bahavaḥ*

4. P. 13.

5. P. 16.

6. P. 5.

7. P. 11.

Yāminī

INTRODUCTORY

This one act play, also published in the *Maṇimañjarī*, deals with an episode from the life of Bilhaṇa—his love affair with Yāminī.

PLOT

Princess Yāminī takes lessons in music and literature from Bilhaṇa. To avoid their mutual intimacy a curtain is placed between them, lest they should start loving each other. Yāminī's father falsely tells each of the physical defects of the other. Bilhaṇa is given to understand that Yāminī is suffering from leprosy, while Yāminī is given to understand that Bilhaṇa is blind. But all these precautions fail and the teacher and the taught develop love for each other. Once Yāminī dreams that her lover is bitten by a serpent. She sends her maid-servant to astrologers to enquire about the effect of this dream. They all say that the dream is auspicious. On the same day both of them remove the curtain which had stood in the way of the fulfilment of their love. They are astonished to see that neither of them has the defect attributed to them. Both are healthy and beautiful. They happily engage in love talk but at the same time the king Maḍanābhirāma comes there and is furious to see them both engaged in love-making. He abuses them. He orders that Bilhaṇa be taken out and be put to death instantaneously. Princess Yāminī requests her father that he should show mercy to him (Bilhaṇa) and spare his life as she has chosen him her husband. But the king does not listen to her and is harsh towards her too. But Destiny does not allow him (the king) to deprive Bilhaṇa of his life. After sometime the butchers come and inform him that the sword which they raised to kill Bilhaṇa became a garland in his neck and that he is quite hale and hearty. The king is very much impressed by this incident. He himself goes to Bilhaṇa and apologizes to him. He not only rescinds his earlier order to kill him but also offers his daughter Yāminī in marriage.

CHARACTERIZATION

Bilhaṇa—The character of Bilhaṇa as it emerges from a study of the drama is that of a romantic hero who was prepared to sacrifice his very life for the

sake of love. His poetry was so powerful that the sword which rose to kill him became a beautiful garland of flowers. King Madanābhirāmā who first flew into rage and ordered the murder of the poet became one of his staunchest admirers later justifying amply the adage "those who came to scoff remained to pray." It is in the following words that he expresses his remorse at all that he did to him and begs his forgiveness :

एष कविः निवर्तते । हन्त! अपराधी खल्वहम् । एतं क्षमापयामि । भगवन् । प्रसीद प्रसीद ।
क्षन्त्योऽहम् । भवतः कवितयैव चराचरं जगत् प्राणान् धारयति । तस्मिन् अपराध्य जिह्मेमि ।
जाल्मेन मया यत्कृतं तत्सर्वं क्षन्तुमर्हसि ।¹

"Here comes back the poet. Oh, I am guilty. I will beg him pardon. Sir, be pleased, be pleased. I may be excused. It is with your poetry only that this world, moving and stationary, sustains itself. I am ashamed of myself having committed an offence against you. You please forgive all that which I, the wicked man, have done."

Yāminī—She is a young princess who like any young girl falls in love with the teacher who teaches her though every precaution is taken to avoid their being intimate with each other. She knows that her father is strictly against their marriage still she is adamant and has her way.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The present play is very small covering only six printed pages. It has little to appeal to connoisseurs. At times its poetry leaves much to be desired. As an illustration we quote the following verse :

चन्द्र ! त्वदीयमभिरम्यमगाधकान्ति
निर्वर्ण्य विम्बमसकृत् मुदितान्तरङ्गः ।
अन्तर्ज्वलामि मलिनाङ्कुविलोकेन
एषोऽयमञ्जलिरनन्तकलानिधे ते ॥²

"O you, the moon, having repeatedly seen this charming and exquisitely beautiful orb of yours I feel joy in my heart. (But) when I see your dark spot, I am scorched (with heat) in my own self. O you with countless discs I offer you my obeisance with this folded hand of mine."

While analysing this verse we find the following discrepancies. In the first line the orb (*bimba*) of the moon is spoken of as *abhiramya* and *agādhakānti*. If it is *agādhakānti* what is left there for *abhiramya* to do ? In the fourth line the moon is spoken of as *anantakālānidhi* which is

1. p. 24.

2. p. 21.

impossible, the moon has only the sixteen discs. Again it is not clear as to what the author precisely wants to signify by using such a big expression. Further, in the second line Bilhana is spoken of as *muditāntarangah* by looking at the moon many times but in the very next line he is made to say *antar'jvalāmi*.

There are however a few good lines too, as for example,

(क) नूनं विचित्राणि विधेर्विलसितानि¹

(ख) नात्र चित्रं यदि कुमुदिनी चन्द्रं प्रति स्निह्यति ।²

The verse

संगीतेन मनो विकासयसि मे वाक्यैः सुधास्यन्दिभिः

कर्णौ सिञ्चसि काव्यतत्त्वमखिलं जानासि, शास्त्रेषु ते ।

बुद्धिः सूक्ष्मविलोकिनी, ललितया तन्वा न दृष्टापि मा-

मात्मायत्तमथाकरोस्तव कृते जीवामि मां पालय ।³

too is quite delightful on account of its simplicity of diction and the judicious arrangement of words.

1. P. 19.

2. P. 22.

3. P. 22.

Kaliprādurbhāvam

INTRODUCTORY

The play 'Kaliprādurbhāvam' is written by Y. Mahalinga Sastri. It consists of seven acts and is published from the Sahitya Chāndrasala, Thiruvallangadu in 1956.

In the preface the author says that the present play was inspired by a story narrated to him in brief outlines by a senior friend of his who also stated that the same found mention in the Mahābhārata. The episode was published as a short story in the 'Udyāna Patrikā' in February and March, 1930.

The author dramatised it in January 1939 and published a Tamil translation of it in the 'Silpa Sri' in February 1939.

That story has now been given the dramatic garb and is a reprint from the Udyāna Patrikā.

PLOT¹

*"First act—*The story begins on the last day of the Dvāpara Yuga. Kātyāyana is a Brahmin who has a large family to maintain and is in debts. He sells his land on that date to a Vaiśya, a money lender. When the Vaiśya ploughs the land, he discovers a treasure trove. He considers that he has no moral claim to it, and seeks his seller and offers to deliver the pot with the treasure to him. But the Brahmin refuses to receive it. He maintains that, when he sold the land, the purchaser became entitled to everything in the land. But the Vaiśya replies that the existence of the treasure was unknown to them when sale was effected, and that the price stipulated for and paid was only for the land. The Brahmin ultimately proposes that he would refer the matter to the decision of the learned men, the next day and they depart.

*Second act—*Then follows the night, and at midnight (this is, I suppose, a western notion) there is a changeover from the Dvāpara to the Kali age. The change is marked by violent winds, fires, and other manifestations. Kali declares that thereafter money will become the breath of life, that people finding their strength in union will start fighting against each other and for

1. I have adopted the plot as it is given in the Justice Iyer's Foreword to the play.

their self-enrichment, and that Dharma could no longer be seen owing to countless delusions. That marks the end of the second act.

Third act—There is a conversation after midnight between the Vaiśya moneylender and his wife. The advent of Kali has already changed their mind. The Vaiśya confesses that he had been very stupid and promises not to return the treasure to Kātyāyana.

Fourth act—At the same time, after the advent of Kali, the Brahmin ruminates over what he had said and regrets having declined to accept the pot when it was delivered, and proposes to seek the Vaiśya in the morning and persuade him to return the treasure. "If he refuses to do so, I will go to the king Caladharma for redress" he swears.

Fifth act—After the eventful midnight, King Caladharma is holding consultations with his ministers. He was the follower of Duryodhana, and having been overcome by the Pāṇḍavas, became their tributary. He considers that as Kṛṣṇa has left this world, the time is ripe for reasserting his independence, and is supported by the commander who states that the army is equal to it. The prime minister states that the financial position requires to be strengthened before the army could be marched. One of the ministers suggests that a new law might be enacted that all treasure troves should be handed over to the king, and that whoever suppresses their discovery should be punished. It was true, he stated that this was not in accordance with Manu's laws, but they could be changed to suit the needs of the times, and this was unanimously agreed to.

Sixth act—This act witnesses the assemblage of learned Brahmins before whom Kātyāyana has laid a complaint against the Vaiśya for the return of the treasure. Both the parties are equally assertive of their exclusive right to it and are adamant in their attitude. The assemblage suggests that they may divide the treasure equally between them but the Vaiśya refuses to accept it, and charging the members with partiality goes away.

Seventh act—The act represents a court scene. On the complaint of the Brahmin, the judge asks the Vaiśya whether he had discovered the treasure. The Vaiśya declares that there was no treasure ever discovered in the field, and that it was a false and malicious invention of Kātyāyana. The house of the Vaiśya is then searched, and his wife hands over the treasure trove to the officer and prays that the husband's life be spared. The judge then tells the Vaiśya that under the law it was an offence on his part not to have disclosed the treasure but that being the first offence of its kind he was not

going to punish him for that, and that as he gave a false statement in court, he would be punished therefor by being deprived of all his properties except his residential house and the capital of his business. He also directed that the field should be delivered to Kātyāyana as a reward for his having brought the discovery to the notice of the king."

CHARACTERIZATION

There are only two principal characters in the play, Brāhmaṇa and Vaiśya. But they have no individuality of their own. The real characterization however pertains to the beginning of the Kali age and the end of Dvāpara. The principal aim of the play is to show how Kali influenced the life and character of the people. The straightforward and simpleminded Brāhmaṇas and merchants of the earlier era have turned to be crooks in the Kali age. They represent two types who are foils and counterfoils to each other. In the Dvāpara age, they consider it a sin to take away somebody's wealth. They want to keep away from it but in the Kali age they have turned to be selfish and like to lay their hands on it. They consider it a mistake not to have done so earlier. That is why the merchant tells his wife :

समाश्वसिहि कान्ते समाश्वसिहि । यत्सत्यं प्रमुग्धोऽभवम् । लज्जे चिन्तयन्तपि मे तदुत्कूलं मोढ्यम् । किन्तु हस्तगतो मे प्रतीकारः । प्रगे पश्य, भर्तुस्तव मतिकौशलम् । सर्वथा न दास्यामि कुम्भम् । द्रक्ष्यामि किमेष जरठो विप्रः प्रतिपत्स्यत इति ।¹

"Be consoled, O beloved, be consoled. Really I was confounded. I am ashamed to think of even my foolishness at that time. But the remedy is now with me. See the cleverness of your husband in the morning. In no way shall I give this jar. I will see what this old Brāhmaṇa would do."

On the other hand the Brāhmaṇa feels sorry for his earlier simplicity. Says he :

प्रभात एव तमासाद्य तस्मै प्रमाणोत्तरं ब्राह्मणस्वापहरणे दोषानुपपादयिष्यामि ।..... स्थाने खलु लोकप्रवादोऽयम् । गतानुशोचिनो विप्राः इति । भवतु । जातं जातं समाधास्ये विषमम् ।²

"I will catch hold of him in the very morning and after adducing evidence charge him with taking away a Brāhmaṇa's belongings. True is this popular saying that the Brāhmaṇas repent over the things bygone. Well, as and as things go wrong so will I go on setting them right."

1. Third act, p. 5.

2. Fourth act, pp. 6-7.

We thus see that the aim of the playwright is to draw a character-sketch of Kali. Individual characterization is merely incidental and is introduced only to serve the main purpose.

King Caladharna too comes under this very category. In the Kali age even a king is not free from financial worries. He is out to establish his complete control on wealth and power.

Pratirājasūyam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Pratirājasūyam* is written by Y. Mahalinga Sastri. It has seven acts and 186 pages. It is published from Madras in the year 1957.

The play has for its plot, two fascinating episodes in the *Mahābhārata*, namely Dharmaputra's hospitality in the forest to the sage Durvāsas through miracle and blessing to Draupadī and Duryodhana's humiliation at the hands of the Gandharva king, Citraratha and the help rendered by the Pāṇḍavas to him, in spite of Duryodhana's enmity and acts of ill will against them. The famous declaration by Yudhiṣṭhira that when an enemy attacks them they will be one hundred and five, while on other occasions they may be opposed to each other as hundred against five, is part of this episode. The author has very skilfully dramatised these two episodes and has beautifully brought out their moral.

PLOT

First act—Dhṛtarāṣṭra insults Vidura. This drives him to the Kāmyakavana to stay with the Pāṇḍavas. Dhṛtarāṣṭra knows that the Pāṇḍavas have been ill treated, still he cannot go against the wishes of his spoilt son. When Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers go into exile in the forest all the Brahmins of his kingdom accompany him. Yudhiṣṭhira is worried about the problem of feeding them. The Sun God relieves him of this worry by giving him the Akṣayapātra. The *Pātra* can give any amount of food at Draupadī's request. Dhṛtarāṣṭra's anger having subsided he thinks it unwise to lose a person like Vidura. He therefore sends Sañjaya to bring him back before he settles down with the Pāṇḍavas.

Second act—Kuntī is living with Vidura in Hastināpura. Vyāsa sends his pupil Sudarśana to her. He has a message for her. There Sudarśana happens to meet his friend Śaṇḍilyopādhyāya who, after hearing about the Pāṇḍavas, prepares to leave for the Kāmyakavana. Bhīṣma gives Duryodhana good advice but he turns a deaf ear to it. He likes Karṇa and Śakuni only. Duryodhana is perplexed to note that everybody with the sole exception of Karṇa and Śakuni is in favour of living with the Pāṇḍavas. Even the

general masses openly protest against the injustice done to them. He orders that the citizens violating his order should be imprisoned. Sañjaya pacifies the angry subjects. He also advises Duryodhana that he should follow the policy of peace and not antagonise the public opinion but Śakuni enrages him by saying that he should ever guard his kingdom from his enemies. Duryodhana is informed that Arjuna has gone to the Himālayas to practise penance for the acquisition of the Pāsupatāstra. Bhīma has left Kāmyaka to bring the Saugandhika flower for Draupadī. Duryodhana plans to humiliate Yudhiṣṭhira in order to gain popularity among his subjects. He also insists on performing the Rājasūya and orders Karṇa to proceed on the Digvijaya. The priest sent by Yudhiṣṭhira tells them that it is not wise to perform Rājasūya when Yudhiṣṭhira is there but Duryodhana does not pay any heed to his words and prepares for a rival Rājasūya—the 'Pratirājasūya'.

Third act—In the interlude of this act three kinds of informations are given : one, Durvāsas has descended on the earth to spread the Dharma of hospitality. Two, Śiva has gone to meet Arjuna in the guise of a hunter. Three, Kṛṣṇa has killed Sālva, the brother of Śiśupāla, in battle.

This is one side. On the other side Sudarśana is shown as engaged in publicizing in open meetings the ill-treatment meted out by Kauravas to their kith and kin, the Pāṇḍavas. He also tells the people of Hastināpura that Duryodhana is committing a sin in performing Rājasūya when Arjuna, Bhīma and Kṛṣṇa are away on other jobs. But his speech is interrupted by a police officer who reaches there and arrests him and his other companions on the spot by the orders of the king. The audience is furious at this. They move to the house of Vidura to have his Darśana. Vidura has taken a vow to proceed on a twelve years' pilgrimage and has sent Kuntī to Dvārakā. Sudarśana is, as has been said above, taken prisoner. He awaits the orders of the king behind the prison walls.

Balabhadra is eager to congratulate Duryodhana on his victory over the earth. To further deepen his intimacy with Duryodhana he wants to marry his daughter Vatsalā to Duryodhana's son Lakṣmaṇa. Kṛṣṇa's absence from Dvārakā provides him with the right opportunity to meet Duryodhana and have a heart to heart talk with him. Balabhadra goes to meet Duryodhana. Both appreciate each other's idea but this mutual understanding is interrupted by a message of Karṇa wherein he has expressed his desire to invade the country of Vṛṣṇis to complete the Digvijaya. This upsets Balabhadra and

he at once leaves for Dvārakā. Duryodhana is also very much disappointed at this because he himself is very much eager for marrying Lakṣmaṇa with Vatsalā. He sends a message to Karṇa saying that he should leave aside everything and approach Balabhadra at Dvārakā with all the wealth won in the war and offer it to him so that this matrimonial alliance could be accomplished.

On the other hand Sudarśana and Tāḍyāyana are brought before the king so that he may pronounce judgment upon them but the timely approach of Durvāsas helps them and as scared people disperse Sudarśana and Tāḍyāyana also make good their escape.

Fourth act—Durvāsas is treated by Duryodhana as an honoured guest. All his attendants and he himself are mortally afraid of the sage who flies into anger even at the slightest provocation and pronounces a curse. One day the sage disappears suddenly and does not return. The king and the queen cannot break their fast until they have fed the sage. The whole atmosphere of the royal palace is panic-stricken. Meanwhile Nārada informs Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Śakuni that Arjuna has penance and has got the Pāśupatāstra. He is now busy in controlling an Asura tribe which troubles Mahendra. Bhīma is also not with Yudhiṣṭhira in the Kāmyakavana. He is happy that by the time both Arjuna and Bhīma return from their expedition Duryodhana would have completed his Rājasūya. After Nārada leaves the royal people are informed about the reappearance of Durvāsas. The sage seems visibly contented and Duryodhana at the instance of Śakuni requests the sage to go to the Kāmyakavana and accept the hospitality of Yudhiṣṭhira.

A crushing defeat is inflicted by Arjuna on the Nivātakavacas, an Asura tribe. Asuras, infuriated at this, seek Duryodhana's help. Arjuna is on the side of the Devas. So Duryodhana is naturally inclined to help the Asuras. Asuras assure Duryodhana that they would give him such powers as will make him indestructible. At this very opportunity Śakuni wants to play a trick on Yudhiṣṭhira. On the other hand he is informed that Karṇa has returned from Digvijaya and has also revived his relations with Balabhadra.

Fifth act—Jaṭāsura in the guise of a Brahmin approaches Yudhiṣṭhira who happens at that time to be performing his evening prayers on the banks of the river Sarasvatī. He gives him the false news that Arjuna has assaulted Indrāṇī and that she has cursed him that he would fall down on earth a python. His information is further confirmed when some hunters come running and tell Yudhiṣṭhira that a huge python is devouring Bhīma. The

python talks like a learned man, and says that he will release him only when somebody answers his questions. Yudhiṣṭhira believes in whatever he has heard and leaving his evening prayers accompanies the hunters. From another side Draupadī falls a prey to the treachery of the Kauravas who have come to enjoy nature with all its beauty and charm. But their evil designs do not succeed because Citrāratha, who is coming to meet Yudhiṣṭhira, reaches the place in the nick of time and saves Draupadī. Citraratha declares war against the Kauravas. Duryodhana is very much upset by this sudden attack.

Sixth act—After achieving a big victory, Arjuna is returning to earth from heaven in Indra's aerial car. He catches an aerial glimpse of the battle being fought between the Gandharvas and the Kauravas. Gandharvas after winning the battle are taking their prisoners of war to their own land. Suddenly Arjuna notices that his son Abhimanyu is fighting against the Gandharvas and trying to rescue the prisoners of war. Arjuna hurriedly arrives at the scene and restrains Abhimanyu from rescuing Duryodhana and company while he congratulates Citraratha for his heroic deed.

On the other hand Durvāsas reaches Yudhiṣṭhira's hermitage for enjoying his hospitality. As all the brothers are away the responsibility for satisfying the honoured guest falls on poor Draupadī. She prays to Kṛṣṇa for help. He comes to her and helps her. Durvāsas is highly pleased with the Pāṇḍavas' hospitality. Having come to see through the Kauravas' game he pronounces a curse on them.

Bhīma comes back with the Saugandhika flower. He offers it to Draupadī and relates to her that the python which entrapped him was no other than king Nahuṣa. He also tells her as to how Dharmaputra not only rescued him but also relieved Nahuṣa of his curse. Bhīma goes out to face the mischief-maker (Jaṭāsura) who gave the false information that the python was no other than Arjuna and that Durvāsas was not satisfied with the hospitality of the Pāṇḍavas.

Seventh act—The introductory scene of this act presents Vikala, an Asura spy, being the spectator of the following events. The mischief maker Jaṭāsura is crushed to pieces by the powerful mace of Bhīma and the family of the Kauravas is taken prisoner by the Gandharva army.

In the act proper Arjuna, Citraratha and Abhimanyu are shown arguing about the release of the prisoners. Abhimanyu says that as Citraratha is at present his captive he would not release him unless he agrees to release

his kinsmen. Citraratha playfully answers that as Abhimanyu is the son of his dear friend Arjuna he is at his service, but he cannot release the prisoners of war unless he receives the orders from Mahendra. When they themselves cannot arrive at any agreed decision they go to Yudhiṣṭhira for final arbitration. Yudhiṣṭhira pleads with Citraratha for the release of his kinsmen at once. Citraratha sends Mātali to get the orders from Mahendra (for the release of prisoners). Duryodhana is sufficiently humiliated and relents for all that he did to humiliate the Pāṇḍavas. Meanwhile Mātali comes with the orders of Mahendra. Mahendra has sanctioned the release of the prisoners on certain conditions which are: (1) Duryodhana with his army must approach Yudhiṣṭhira and say: 'I am your slave', (2) that he should undertake to give back the kingdom to Yudhiṣṭhira after the stipulated period, (3) that he should give up the idea of performing the Rājasūya sacrifice. Mahendra also expresses his wish that as Citraratha is the captive of Abhimanyu and the Kauravas are the captives of Citraratha so Abhimanyu is entitled to release the Kauravas himself. Duryodhana is ordered to be produced before Abhimanyu but surprisingly enough he (Duryodhana) vanishes from the scene. On the other hand Balabhadra comes with Vatsalā to see Duryodhana, and marry her to his son Lakṣmaṇa but as Duryodhana has mysteriously disappeared his whole plan is upset. Kṛṣṇa at that time appears and persuades Balabhadra to marry Vatsalā to Abhimanyu because according to his information both love each other. Balabhadra agrees. The marriage is to be solemnized in the Kāmyakavana. Yudhiṣṭhira invites Duryodhana in the marriage. Nārada explains the disappearance of Duryodhana. The play ends with Yudhiṣṭhira's prayer that there should be happiness and light in the whole world.

CHARACTERIZATION

All the characters of the play namely Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira, Arjuna, Duryodhana and Draupadī are well known. Every one plays his or her part perfectly well. Kṛṣṇa is a clever politician. He manages everything in no time.

Yudhiṣṭhira is ever-forgiving; he always helps Kauravas although they always conspire to harm him. He invites them to the marriage of Abhimanyu with Vatsalā though the latter had tried to humiliate him by exhibiting their pomp and show in the vicinity of the Kāmyakavana.

Arjuna is a warrior in its full sense. He fights with the Asuras and inflicts on them a crushing defeat. He does not like to help those who have

harmed him. That is why when his own son Abhimanyu tries to rescue the Kauravas from the clutches of Citraratha he personally goes to tell Abhimanyu not to do so.

Duryodhana is an evil-minded king. He keeps company with people like Karṇa and Śakuni, who misguide him. His shallowness is obvious when he shows his grandeur by encamping in the vicinity of the Kāmyakavana, where Pāṇḍavas are living. He is punished for his haughtiness by Citraratha, the Gandharva king.

Draupadī is the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas. She is a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Whenever any difficulty arises she prays to Kṛṣṇa for help and her prayer is answered instantaneously. When the problem of feeding Durvāsas arises Kṛṣṇa helps her. The timely approach of Citraratha when she is molested by Kauravas in the Kāmyakavana is a miracle which saves her honour.

Udgātrdaśānanam

INTRODUCTORY

The Udgātrdaśānanam is a play in seven acts covering some sixty six printed pages by the great Sanskrit savant, Y. Mahalinga Sastri of Madras, who has enriched Sanskrit literature with a large number of works both poems and prose. The play in question is a mythological one dealing with the Puranic story of demon Rāvaṇa trying to lift up the mount Kailāsa, the abode of Lord Śiva. The play is remarkable in more ways than one. Herein we come to know of many valuable spiritual truths and moral lessons. How an arrogant man is humbled and taken into the divine protection and care; how god transforms the wicked into the divine personalities; how evil side of a man is ultimately subdued and conquered by his innate divinity; how reliance on God is the safest method of winning His Grace and blessings, is all that has been depicted in the present play.

The author gives the following information about his play: "Udgātrdaśānanam was the first drama which I attempted to write. I began it about the end of 1927 and wrote the first four acts by December 1928. Fourteen years elapsed before I took it up again for completing it. The last three acts were written between January 29th and March 6th of 1943. The fourth act concludes with Rāvaṇa's fall to the foot of Kailāsa by the condemnation of Nandī Bhagavān. The opening verses of the Fifth act refer in a veiled manner to the gap of fourteen years which separated the composition of the first from that of the second part of the drama."¹

PLOT

First act—After Nāndī, Bhṛṅgiriṭi and Nandī are talking to each other. Nandī is worried about the quarrel between Pārvatī and Śiva. Bhṛṅgiriṭi wants to know its cause. Nandī tells him that Śiva has cursed Pārvatī's friend Vijayā for overhearing their talk. Earlier Śiva had instructed Pārvatī not to allow anybody to hear their conversation but Pārvatī did not obey him and allowed Vijayā into the Chamber. When Śiva was narrating to Pārvatī some strange happenings of the earlier aeons Vijayā spontaneously gave out the word *hanta* which revealed her presence in the Chamber to

1. Author's Preface, P. VII.

Śiva who lost his temper at that and cursed Vijayā to become a Piśācinī (a goblin woman). Vijayā became Piśācinī that very moment and Śiva went into meditation. Pārvatī, ashamed of her disobedience came out quietly from that place. When Nandī finishes this he and Bhṛṅgiriṭi hear the roar of a lion and a confused noise of the fight. Both Vināyaka and Skanda, the two sons of Śiva, are afraid of that noise and run helter skelter. They come to know that this is Daśamukha's doing. Frightened Skanda asks Vināyaka as to who this Daśamukha is. Vināyaka tells him that he (Daśamukha) is the grandson of Brahmā and stepbrother of Kubera. He has won Alakāpurī, the kingdom of his stepbrother. Puffed up by this victory he now wants to conquer Kailāsa. Meanwhile 'evening' and 'night' also appear there and describe the pathetic condition of Alakā where Rākṣasas have destroyed everything. They have killed the lord of the Yakṣas. The site of Alakāpurī presents a horrible spectacle for the mass destruction it has suffered. Sandhyā (evening), Rātri (night), Vināyaka, Skanda and Bhṛṅgiriṭi all hear the terrible noise of war and are worried because Śiva and Pārvatī are not on speaking terms with each other.

Second act—Nārada and Devadūta are shown engaged in a conversation. Indra has sent the Devadūta to inform Śiva that the gods want to see him. Nārada himself is interested in the gods' seeking an audience with Śiva. This makes the Devadūta very happy.

On the other hand Daśānana arrogant and defiant on account of his victory over Alakāpurī and accompanied with his minister orders for the throne of Kubera for himself and the other thrones for his ministers. When the thrones arrive they all sit on them. Meanwhile Śuka and Sāraṇa inform Daśānana that a certain Yakṣa has come. Daśānana allows the messenger in. The messenger tells him that he has come for a treaty. Daśānana haughtily says that the Rākṣasas and the Devas are inborn enemies and there can be no treaty of friendship between them. Rāvaṇa then discusses the matter with his ministers. Yakṣa finding it a suitable moment slips away. After sometime Rāvaṇa finds that the messenger has vanished from the scene. He is perplexed about his disappearance. This confusion proves to be the first signal of his defeat. He becomes furious and pledges that he would certainly conquer heaven, and after conquering it, would offer it to Mahodara as a gift. After this all his ministers go to see the stores of Alakāpurī. Only Rāvaṇa remains there engrossed in the thoughts of his future plans.

Third act—A woman named Cañcalā is searching for her friend Rambhā. The

whole Alakāpurī is terrified due to the attack of the Rākṣasas. The honour of no woman is safe if she moves out of her home. Cañcalā is afraid that Rambhā is standing on the roof of Candra palace and Rāvaṇa is also proceeding to that side. Cañcalā visualizes the calamity that may befall her friend and goes to help her. On the other hand Daśānana is shown chasing Rambhā. All his limbs are aching due to passion. He comes across the shadow of Rambhā when he enters Candra palace. But Cañcalā informs Rambhā in a loud voice that she should run away from that place as early as possible. Daśānana chases her but as the clouds interrupt him, his eyesight is blurred; he hits the Kalpa tree. At first he is furious at it (the Kalpa tree) but after some time he begins to pray before it for the fulfilment of his desire. Meanwhile Daśānana's ministers return with the same Yakṣa. They beat him mercilessly. The Yakṣa cries for help but nobody listens to him. They leave the injured Yakṣa there and in Puṣpaka fly to Kailāsa.

Fourth act — Nārada comes to the injured Yakṣa. He pours water from his Kamaṇḍalu and brings him back to consciousness. Yakṣa is still suffering from the shock and is too terrified to speak. Nārada consoles him and removes his fear. Yakṣa is happy to see Nārada but when he comes to know that the Rākṣasas have flown in the Puṣpaka to Kailāsa he is very much upset and feels terribly sorry for not conveying to Śiva the message of Indra. Nārada assures him that he would help him. He asks him to proceed to Kubera and tell him that he should remain alert lest the Rākṣasas attack heaven. He also instructs him that while on his way he should warn Nandī to be on guard at the front door. No one should be slack in his duty.

On the other hand Daśānana accompanied by his ministers reaches Kailāsa, Riding on clouds Nārada also reaches there. He congratulates Rāvaṇa for winning Alakāpurī. Rāvaṇa accepts the congratulations but tauntingly remarks that he (Nārada) is on the side of the Devas and his congratulations to him should mean blessings. Rāvaṇa asks from Nārada some news of the gods. Nārada tells him that his victory over Alakāpurī has struck terror in the hearts of all of them and that they are now preparing for war and are at present gathered in Kailāsa to seek proper guidance from Śiva. Rāvaṇa arrogantly tells Nārada that he will conquer Kailāsa too. Nārada tells him that Śiva is not only a 'Digīśa' he is also the Lord of Lords and that he should desist from following such a course. The power-drunk Rāvaṇa however does not listen to Nārada. He thinks that after conquering Kailāsa he will be considered the conqueror of the three worlds. He moves closer to

Kailāsa but is wonderstruck to see its grandeur. Bhṛṅgiriṭi asks the Rākṣasas not to make noise because Śiva is lost in meditation, but the powerdrunk Commander-in-chief of Rāvaṇa's army snaps back that he would kill meditating Śiva along with his followers. Meanwhile Pārvatī and Vijayā who are talking to each other hear the big noise of the demons. Vijayā requests Pārvatī to go inside because the mob may come to that side any moment. Daśānana hears the feminine voice and attracted by it orders his Puṣpaka to go to the side from where the voice is heard. Exactly at that moment a curse is pronounced upon him which says that his Puṣpaka cannot move further and must remain still. As the voice utters these words the Puṣpaka stands still there and does not budge an inch from its place. Meanwhile Nandī appears and tells Daśānana that if he tries to do something improper he would be killed. At this both Rāvaṇa and Nandī have a wordy duel. Rāvaṇa uses some insulting words for Śiva. Thereupon enraged Nandī pronounces a curse upon him saying that he would fall down on the earth. With these words Rāvaṇa falls on the earth. Nandī goes to receive Indra and other guests.

Fifth act — Indra and Vācaspati have come to see Lord Śiva. They are mighty happy by the fall of Rāvaṇa. Nandī comes to them and receives them with due honours. They request Nandī to arrange for their interview with Lord Śiva. Just at that time Rāvaṇa gets up and lifts up Kailāsa on his shoulders. Indra doubts very much the capacity of Rāvaṇa in lifting Kailāsa on his shoulders but Nandī tells him that there is nothing impossible for demons. All the inhabitants of it are struck with terror. The trees fall, the stones break into pieces and roll. The entire atmosphere becomes uneasy. But this situation lasts for only a short while. The whole atmosphere is calm and quiet after sometime. On the other hand a terrible cry is heard from the earth. It is informed that the arms of Rāvaṇa are being crushed under the weight of Kailāsa because Lord Śiva has pressed the mountain with his toe. The mountain has become steady by his pressing but the arms of Rāvaṇa are totally crushed and he is crying out of pain. When the pain becomes unbearable Rāvaṇa sings in praise of Śiva.

Sixth act—Vidyujjihva and Mahodara, the ministers of Rāvaṇa, approach him and console him. They also tell him that he has not done the right thing by making Śiva his enemy. Now the only way to his freedom is to praise Him (Śiva).

Seventh act—Nārada bows low before Kailāsa and praises it. Meanwhile he hears the praise of Śiva by Rāvaṇa. He follows that song with his Vīṇā. Rāvaṇa's praise of Śiva is couched in a very pathetic tone. Nārada believes that though Rāvaṇa has committed a big blunder yet by this praise he would please Śiva easily who would then forgive his sins. This chorus of Śiva's praise is joined by his Pārśadas too. Puṣpadanta, Upamanyu, Mārkaṇḍeya, Durvāsas and Caṇḍīśa etc. all praise him. Śiva is pleased by their praise. A voice from above announces that Lord Śiva has removed his toe from Kailāsa and Rāvaṇa has been set free. Nārada happily proclaims that his words have come true. Now Śiva will not only free Rāvaṇa but will also bestow upon him some blessings.

Pleased Lord Śiva appears before Rāvaṇa who asks for a boon viz., he should be the world conqueror. The pleased Lord offers him a sword named Candrahāsa. Rāvaṇa also asks the Lord to remove the stillness of Puṣpaka so that it may fly about as before. Śiva agrees to this. But a voice from above announces that the Puṣpaka cannot move unless Lord Śiva relieves Vijayā of her curse. The pleased Lord relieves her of her curse. All are happy at this and go to their respective places. The play ends after the Bharatavākya uttered by Rāvaṇa.

CHARACTERIZATION

Śiva—Śiva is a god of gods. His power is limitless. He helps the deities and punishes the demons. When Rāvaṇa becomes too haughty and arrogant he gives him a good lesson by crushing his twenty arms by pressing the mountain Kailāsa just by his big toe. But he can be pleased very easily. When Rāvaṇa praises him he forgives him. Not only that, he blesses him with an extraordinary boon too. He also forgives the friend of Pārvatī and releases her from the curse he had pronounced upon her earlier.

Pārvatī — She is an ideal woman. But she cannot keep a secret even though specifically asked to do so. She allows Vijayā into the chamber in spite of the instructions of her husband to the contrary. She however loves her husband immensely. When faced with a calamity she embraces Śiva forgetting all her previous quarrel with him.

Rāvaṇa — Rāvaṇa is a brave warrior but bravery is all that of a villain. He challenges even Śiva, the Great Lord. But he meets with fate he deserves. Śiva punishes him by crushing his arms by pressing the mount Kailāsa with his big toe. He is saved only when he sings the praise of the Lord.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The style of the works of Sri Sastri is, by all standards, most pleasant and charming. His Sanskrit has a classical ring about it. Except certain expressions here and there, the works remind us of the writings of the older authors. It is, therefore, certainly rewarding to go through these plays of his, and for that matter, all the plays and the poems of Sri Sastri. They give us a good taste of real and genuine Sanskrit. Sri Sastri understands the shades and nuances of Sanskrit expression and has a thorough command over the genuine Sanskrit idiom. He is also a poet of high calibre and introduces into his works that freshness which is a hallmark of any good poet. The cumulative effect of all this is that the works of Sri Sastri have come to be ranked as some of the very best in the range of modern Sanskrit poetry. The language of the author is generally free from any marked irregularity. Here and there, however, we do come across some minor lapses. Thus in *kutas tvām cintānīhāras samavaruddhy* the construction needs a little toning up. ✓ *Rudh* is used here as that of the Fourth conjugation while actually it belongs to the Eighth conjugation. It should be *Samavaruṇaddhi*. In *yeneme nayane'dya me'nubhavataḥ* the *Sandhi* between *nayane* and *adya* is indefensible, *nayane* being dual there should have been hiatus here as enjoined by Pāṇ. *Iduded dvivacanam Pragrhyaṁ*. (1.1. 11). In *pañcāpi tasya avadhīrya bhartṛn pasparśa roṣād ayam eṣa pāṇih* the use of the Perfect in *pasparśa* is out of place for it is enjoined for a thing which is *Parokṣānadyatana*; the event is *anadyatana* no doubt but how can it be *Parokṣa*? How can the hand and the pulling of the hair by that be something *Parokṣa* for Duḥśāsana?

Sri Sastri embellishes his works with a good number of proverbs and aphorisms. A few of them are given below :

- (क) स्थाने खलु लोकप्रवादोयं गतानुशोचिनो विप्राः ।¹
- (ख) अयं च पाशमुत्सृज्य लाङ्गूलावलम्बं चिकीर्षति ।²
- (ग) क्षिप्रकारी पश्चात्तापशीलः ।³
- (घ) हस्तगतं परित्यज्य किं सन्दिग्धरूपेण फलेन ।⁴
- (ङ) कुतो यूयमापणनारिकेलमध्वविनायकस्य निवेदयथ ।⁵

1. Kaliprādurbhāvam, Fourth act, p 7

2. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 11

3. Ibid.

4. Fourth act, p. 6.

5. Ibid , Sixth act, p 13

- (च) निर्गते नीरे सेतुबन्धाय सहस्रैरपि मिलितैः किं क्रियताम् ।¹
- (छ) अयमेवमधिगतमहिम्नां मकरदंष्ट्रायाः पल्लवाङ्कुरताविष्कारः ।²
- (ज) राजा वैश्यं यन्त्रनिष्पीडितस्याखुपोतस्य समवस्थां प्रापयिष्यति ।³
- (झ) किमेवं महाकूष्माण्डमन्वसोऽन्तर्निगूहितुमिच्छसि ।⁴
- (ञ) बहिराविद्ध्यमानानां देवस्य दुरूपक्रमैः ।
अन्तश्छिद्रात् परं नास्ति शोकस्थानं सचेतसाम् ॥⁵
- (ट) कः प्रक्षीणं व्यालं दयया दुग्धेन जीवयेदजडः ।
उदितैरुदितैरेतैः सुरपीडामेष किं न जानाति ॥⁶
- (ठ) किञ्चैतत् पश्यामि सुविहितमेव यदनपेतविपदः सांसारिकाः सम्पदः ।⁷
- (ड) वाचापि न मे उपचारं भणन्ति ।⁸
- (ढ) रत्नमित्यादित्सितं नः किल हस्ते अश्मैव भवति ।⁹
- (ण) असीममुद्रा ह्युत्कर्षनिश्रेणिः ।¹⁰
- (त) आत्यन्तिकव्यापत्तेरर्वाक् कुतो नु नाम विशृङ्खलानां खलानामपथादुपरतिर्घटते ।
भवितव्यता खलु बलवती ।¹¹
- (थ) किं नदीरयो रोभपातेन निवार्यते ।¹²
- (द) समभीष्टपरिवादकं पथ्यं खलु प्रायः कटु भवति प्राणिनां परोपन्यस्तम् ।¹³
- (ध) लोकोत्तरः खलु गुणो बहुदुःखमूलम् ।¹⁴
- (न) हितवादिनो विपक्षीयन्ते खलु विपत्क्षीणमतीनां दुर्मतीनाम् ।¹⁵
- (प) किं युवां गगनाङ्गणवल्लरीपुष्पावचयं करिष्यथः ।¹⁶

1. Ibid..
2. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. Seventh act, p. 14.
5. Udgātrdaśānanam, First act, p. 8.
6. Ibid., Second act, p. 9.
7. Ibid., Second act, p. 11.
8. Ibid., Third act, p. 29.
9. Ibid., Third act, p. 32.
10. Fourth act, p. 38.
11. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 46.
12. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 47.
13. Pratirājasūyam, First act, p. 7.
14. Ibid., Second act, p. 21.
15. Ibid., Second act, p. 33.
16. Ibid., Second act, p. 43.

- (फ) न खलु सारल्येन प्रत्यवपत्स्यन्ते दुर्विदग्धाः ।¹
 (ब) कृच्छ्रे स्वदोषान्गणयन्ति सन्तः सुखागमेऽन्येषु गुणान्गणयन्ति ।²
 (भ) यदा तृणं चरन्ति मृगेन्द्राः भोजायन्ते न किं ग्रामसिंहाः ।³
 (म) नैसर्गिकं स्वभावं नातिवर्तितुं क्षमन्ते देहिनः ।⁴
 (य) पुङ्खानुपुङ्खमेवैताः प्रवर्तन्ते शरीरिणाम् ।
 विपदस्सम्पदो वापि स्यूता इव परस्परम् ॥⁵
 (र) प्रवहणे भग्ने किं भाण्डविक्रयाभिकाङ्क्षया ।⁶

The works have in them quite a few onomatopoeic or descriptive words too, as for example :

सिमिसिमायन्ते,⁷ (लुलित) मर्मरम्,⁸ सीत्कुर्वन्ति,⁹ फडिति,¹⁰ फीट्करोति,¹¹ चीत्कार,¹² हुङ्करोति¹³ फुफुरायन्ते,¹⁴ गं गं,¹⁵ खटखटायित,¹⁶ झाङ्कति,¹⁷ गडगडायेते ।¹⁸

The author employs in his works a number of *alankāras*. Among the *śabdāṅkāras* he shows his forte in *Anuprāsa* a few delightful examples of which are reproduced below :

- (क) श्रेयः श्रुतिभिः प्रतिश्रुतम् ।¹⁹
 (ख) यत्कुहनागहनाखण्डमण्डलाहिण्डनोत्सुकः ।²⁰

1. Ibid., Second act, p. 49.
2. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 117.
3. Ibid., p. 134.
4. Seventh act, p. 172
5. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 178.
6. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 181.
7. *Udgatādaśananam*, p. Third act, p. 26
8. Ibid., Third act, p. 27.
9. Ibid., Third act, p. 32.
10. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 48.
11. Ibid., Fifth act, pp. 49; 50; 52.
12. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 52.
13. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 54.
14. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 59.
15. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 34.
16. *Pratirājasūyam*, Fourth act, p. 96.
17. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 140.
18. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 154.
19. *Kaliprādurbhāvam*, Fourth act p. 6.
20. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 7.

- (ग) व्यापारैर्विकटोत्कटैरधिकृताः ।¹
 (घ) साभिबीक्षाविवक्षाक्षण ।²
 (ङ) चिच्छेद बाहून् बहून् ।³
 (च) शृङ्गाणि शैलोऽपि पुरः पुरो नः प्रस्पृशयेव प्रकटीकरोति ।⁴
 (छ) रहस्यभेदी जनः शापमाप ।⁵
 (ज) कलङ्कवणितकिङ्किणीकलितकेतुवेधस्फुरत् ।⁶
 (झ) दशदशनच्छददशमीदशदिग्दशरूपकादिपदघटिते ।⁷
 (ञ) विनिन्दन्ति मनुष्यपाशाः पाशकान् ।⁸
 (ट) रिपुविनयनदक्षः क्षमाभृतां मित्रपक्षः
 प्रणयगुणगवाक्षः श्रीगृहद्वारपक्षः ।
 निजपरनिरपेक्षो निर्भरायासमोक्षो
 जयति विहितशिक्षक्षेमदीक्षाक्षमोक्षः ॥⁹
 (ठ) पतिरतिमतिर्मे नयपथे ।¹⁰
 (ड) चञ्चच्चञ्चुचकोरचातककुलान्युच्चैः कलिं कुर्वन्ते ।¹¹

Among the *arthālaṅkāras* the author shows his forte in similes a number of which are *ayonija* ones. The comparisons are very apt and to the point, as for example, the comparison of the smiling of the fortune with the joy of the heart :

स्वहृदयमिव त्वयि प्रसन्नं देवेन ।¹²

Or the comparison of the loving fortune with a wife with her anger gone:

सर्वथा घर्मो वा अघर्मो वा प्रणयिनी श्रीः विच्छदितमानेव बधूः कृतोपसर्पणा नोपेक्षणीया ऋद्धिकामेन ।¹³

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 8.
2. Udgatrdaśānanam, Second act, p. 16.
3. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 36.
4. Ibid., Third act, p. 40.
5. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 51.
6. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 39.
7. Ibid., Second act, p. 11.
8. Pratirājasūyam, Second act, p. 31.
9. Ibid.,
10. Ibid., Second act, p. 47.
11. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 141.
12. Kaliprādurbhāvam, First act, p. 2.
13. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 11.

Or the comparison of the allround prosperity of Rāvaṇa with a neglected disease :

उपेक्षित इव महारोगस्त्रैलोक्यस्य परिवर्धते दशमुखं दशकण्ठः ।¹

Or the comparison of the setting sun with an oven reflected in a mirror :

भानुः दर्पणकन्दुकल्पः ।²

Or the comparison of Rāvaṇa with a mountain of collyrium :

दशाननः अञ्जनगिरिरिव विचरति ।³

Or the comparison of the frightening of the Yakṣas by Rāvaṇa with the driving away of the flies by the forest-dwellers :

आटविकोत्सारिता मक्षिका इव त्वया अलकाया वित्रासिता यक्षाः ।⁴

Or the comparison of the Bhūtas, the attendants of Śiva, with glaciers marked with moss :

एते हरानुचरभूतगणा नु नाम शैवाललक्ष्मणुहिनोपलदर्शनीयाः ।⁵

Or the comparison of the people taking to falsehood yielding quick and pleasant result in preference to truth looking bitter and yielding no result immediately with children falling in for those very things which are prohibited for them :

सद्योज्ञृतं हृदयहारि फलं च सूते

प्रत्यक्षवन्ध्यममनोज्ञमृतं तु नाम ।

तेनार्भका इव निषिद्धरता भ्रमन्तो

मर्त्या ब्रजन्ति परितापदशां परस्तात् । ।⁶

Or the comparison of the facial expression of the Pitāmaha with the peak of the smoking Agniśaila :

पितामहः इवाग्निशैलकूटस्सुसंरब्धमुखवर्णो दृश्यते ।⁷

Or the comparison of a person with no mental peace with either a person who has lost his cow or the bird who has lost its nest :

तेन मोषीकृताऽटाथ्यो न निष्ठां चेतसो लभे ।

नष्टधेनुरिव स्वामी भ्रष्टनीड इवाण्डजः । ।⁸

1. Udgatṛdaśanānam, Second act, p. 10.

2. Third act, p. 12.

3. Ibid., Third act, p. 12.

4. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 35.

5. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 41.

6. Pratirājasūyam, First act, p. 5.

7. Ibid., Second act, p. 29.

8. Ibid., Third act, p. 56.

Or the comparison of keeping off of Vidura by Duryodhana with the avoiding of the medicine by a patient :

दुर्योधनः, आतुर इवौषधस्य विदुरस्य निरसनमात्महितं मन्यते ।¹

Or the comparison of the following of the sage Durvāsas by Kaukkuṭāyana with a bath in waters frequented by wild beings :

अनियतभोजनवेलं परिणमद्रुपवासदुर्गतं प्रायः ।

सग्राहसलिलराशिस्तानमिवोद्वेगदं नित्यम् । ।²

Or the comparison of Bhīma finding himself in the coils of a cobra with a bundle of sugarcane in the trunk of an elephant :

मुह्यन्नभूत् करिकरेक्षुकलापकल्पः³

Or the comparison of rising of the sun with full water jar carried by the lords of the quarters :

दिक्पालैः पूर्णकुम्भो घृत इव धुरि ते भानुरेषोऽभ्युदेति ।⁴

Apart from the simile the *utprekṣā* too is used by the writer with good effect, a happy illustration of which is provided by the following verse of the Udgātrdaśānanam :

उत्पत्य चोत्पत्य समुज्जिहीते

प्रतिक्षणं पुष्पकमूर्ध्वमूर्ध्वम् ।

शृङ्गाणि शैलोऽपि पुरः पुरो नः

प्रस्पर्धयेव प्रकटीकरोति ।⁵

"Flying and flying Puṣpaka goes up every minute. The mountain too enviously as it were brings forth peak after peak."

Pratirājasūyam too furnishes us with a few good illustrations of *utprekṣā*, as for example, when the Akṣayapātra is imagined to be the favour of the sun condensed :

भगवतोऽम्बरमणेरनुकम्पामिव घनीभूतां मनोरथानुविधात्रीमेनां पात्रीम् ।⁶

Or when the autumnal beauty of the sky is imagined to be a queen giving alms :

1. Ibid., Third act, p. 60.

2. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 90.

3. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 122.

4. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 183.

5. Udgātrdaśānanam, Fourth act, p. 40.

6. Pratirājasūyam, First act, p. 15.

उन्नमितताभ्रमण्डलरविभृङ्गारा पुरस्सरोजानाम् ।

भिक्षाप्रदेव राज्ञी त्रिराजते शारदी नभोलक्ष्मीः ॥¹

Or when Sañjaya trying to get rid of Śakuni is imagined to be like a person who wants to disentangle himself having found himself in a thorny bush :

किं कण्टकगुल्मलग्नमिवात्मानमुन्मोचयितुं त्वरते भवान् ।²

An example of *rūpaka* (metaphor) is found in the following verse where jealousy is spoken of as a scorpion and anger as fire :

ईर्ष्यावृश्चिकदष्टानां मदनाविष्टचेतसाम् ।

क्रोधानलपरीतानां दुरवस्थैव शिक्षणम् ॥³

"Bad state is the only lesson for those whose minds are under the influence of passion, who are full of the fire of anger, and who are bitten by the scorpion of jealousy".

The playwright excels in *stotra* type of poetry too. There are beautiful 'stotras' towards the end of the Seventh act of the Udgātṛdaśānanam. The one of Rāvaṇa, Rāvaṇagītam as it is called by the playwright in the Preface, belongs to a musical composition of the Rāgamālikā type and is specially delightful. The writer is himself conscious of its sweetness and charm. He gives expression to his satisfaction at the composition through the mouth of Nārada :

अहो श्रोत्रपेयता रागामृतपरिवाहस्य । अहो मनःसंवननं साहित्यसौष्ठवम् ।⁴

Among other peculiarities of the works the one which is particularly noteworthy is the detailed and intimate descriptions in them, as for example, we have in the Udgātṛdaśānanam the description of the night which is metaphorically spoken of as a damsel playing in the court-yard of the sky. She wears pearl-necklace in the form of the stars; she is draped in the divine apparel in the form of the flying clouds; she has for her face the rising moon :

तारामौक्तिकहारा सितपरिचलदभ्रदिव्यसंव्याना ।

उल्लसितचन्द्रवदना क्रीडति गगनाङ्गणे रजनी ॥⁵

1. Ibid., First act, p. 15.

2. Ibid., Second act, p. 37

3. Udgātṛdaśānanam, Fourth act, p. 33.

4. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 60.

5. Ibid., First act, p. 3.

Similarly the disturbance caused in the universe brings forth from the writer a description which for its vividness and detail is particularly praiseworthy :

अहो मलीमसा दिशः । अकालमेघोन्मनेन तिरोहितप्रकाशयोस्ताराचन्द्रमसोः व्योमान्ध-
कारनिमीलितम् । पतन्त्युल्काः । वहन्ति पांसूत्किरा आवर्तमरुतः । विध्वस्तनीडाः प्रवेपन्ते शाखिनः ।
विह्वोशन्त्युलूकाः । भपन्ति श्वानः । विरुवन्ति फेरवः । अहो प्रतिभयता अर्घरात्रस्य । तस्मादभि-
वर्तते कलिपुरुषः ।¹

"Oh, the darkness of the quarters, the sky is enveloped in darkness because of the disappearance of the light of the moon and the stars due to the appearance of the untimely clouds; the meteors are falling, the dust-scattering whirlwinds are blowing, the trees with the destroyed nests are shaking, the owls are hooting, the jackals are crying. Oh, the frightfulness of the midnight ! So comes hitherward the Kalipuruṣa."

The same effusiveness of description is also noticeable in the words of the Vaiśyapatnī who in her excitement with the discovery of the *nidhānakumbha*, goes on describing as to the kind of ornaments she would have made for herself with all the gold and precious stones obtained from the treasure :

कतिपयैरेव कलशान्तर्गतै रत्नैः सुविहितसुवर्णसंयोगैः क्लृप्ताभरणभासुरा ह्यहमारात् कर्णयो
रत्नताटङ्कं, कण्ठे नवरत्नमालिकां रत्नकण्ठकं च, चरणयोर्मणिमञ्जीरं, हस्तयो रत्नवलयानि,
अङ्गुलीषूम्भिकाः, नासाविन्दुकं, शिरसश्चन्द्ररेखां, मध्यस्य मणिमेखलाम्, अन्यदन्यच्चाभरणजातं
कारयित्वा तेषां प्रवलेष्यहितततीरुज्ज्वलयितुमलम् ।²

"With only a few jewels in the jar I will have the ornaments made and will shine thereby. Quickly will I have made for me a number of ornaments, such as jewel-studded topes for the ears, a jewel necklace and a nine-jewelled chain for the neck, an anklet for the feet, jewel bracelets for the hands, rings for the fingers, a pin for the nose, a *candrarekhā* for the hand, a jewel girdle for the waist and such other things and (thus) will be able to enkindle in them the series of strokes of strong jealousy."

It is not only of ornaments, of the musical instruments too the author shows good knowledge when he gives us names of quite a few of them—some of them of course obscure—in the verse quoted below :

1. Kaliprādurbhāvam, Second act, p. 3.

2. Ibid., Third act, p. 5.

ह्रिकां ढक्कां काहलं छर्दिमेके
 तुन्दं भेरी निर्भराक्रन्दमन्ये ।
 जृम्भां शङ्खं घर्षरीं नासनालं
 केचिच्चान्ये शेरते वादयन्तः ।¹

Among the further beautiful descriptions mention may be made of the one where the appearance of the early dawn is described in all vividness and charm :

शान्तोलूकरुतासु दिक्षु विहगैर्व्याकीर्णमुत्कूजितं
 कोकानामयमुत्सवः पुनरयं शोकश्चकोरावलेः ।
 लक्ष्मीः कैरवकञ्जयोः कलयते संभावनानुक्रमं
 भानावभ्युदयोन्मुखे च्युतिमसाविन्दुः पुरो विन्दति ।²

"When the sun is about to rise the moon yonder goes down there in front of us. In the quarters the hooting of the owls has ceased while the other birds have begun chirping : It is a festival for the ruddy geese; it is a matter of sorrow for the partridges; the beauty follows the order in offering its honour, first it was with Kairavas now it is with Kañjas."

Another verse describes the same phenomenon and brings out very well the poet in the writer :

पाण्डुच्छाये प्रतिहतमहस्यैन्द्रदिक्तारकौढे
 भानोर्विम्बं तिरयति पुरः संभृते वाष्पवन्द्ये ।
 वासोऽब्जिन्याः परिनिपतता मास्तेनापजह्ने
 भृङ्गैर्घ्यतिं ललितमधुरां भोक्तुमेनामनार्यैः ॥³

"When the mass of stars in the eastern quarter had gone and had begun to shed pale light; when the constant fog collected in front had begun to make the orb of the sun invisible, the swooping wind removed the covering of the lotus stalk, its fragrance. At this the wicked bees thought that they should enjoy this lovely and sweet thing."

The description of the setting sun is found in the following small verse which on account of its poetic beauty has a special appeal for the connoisseurs ;

1. Pratirājasūyam, Seventh act, p. 177.
2. Ibid., Second act, p. 18.
3. Ibid., Second act, p. 20.

हन्त प्रतीचीशैलोरुनितम्बे लम्बते रविः ।

तत्पयोधरपत्रालीरचनारञ्जितैः करैः ॥¹

More detailed and vivid is the description contained in the following verse :

निकुञ्जेभ्यो नीडद्रुमवलयमध्यान्तगदरी-

गुहाभ्यस्सम्भूय द्युमणिमहसामार्तिजनकः ।

समन्तात्सन्ध्यायां प्रचलितमहामौलिकुल-

प्रतीकाशस्साम्प्रीभवति तमसामेष निचयः ॥²

"This massive darkness terrorizing the rays of the sun and resembling the big flock of crows on the move is thickening all over at this time of the dusk, getting together, having come out of the bowers, the ring of trees with nests on them and the mountain caves."

The works, especially the Udgātrdasānanam have a *tāntric* touch too. There is a peculiar passage where there is a veiled mention, as is clear from the text itself, of the *mantrabija*—

अग्रि भो विमानराज, गं गं गगनाङ्गणरिङ्गण, हं हं हंसवाहित, भं भं पुष्पक, उत्तिष्ठो-
त्तिष्ठ स्वर्लोकगमनाय । (पुनः सपरामर्शम्) हा धिक् किं राक्षसाः शृण्वन्ति ? मया मन्त्रबीज-
मुद्घुष्टम् ।³

Occasionally the playwright is seen to quote earlier texts too, as for example :

अत्र च मनुरब्रवीत्—

निधीनां तु पुराणानां धातूनामेव च क्षितौ ।

अर्धभाग्रक्षणाद्राजा भूमेरधिपतिर्हि सः ॥⁴

किन्तु

ममायमिति यो ब्रूयान्निवि सत्येन मानवः ।

तस्याददीत षड्भागं राजा द्वादशमेव वा ॥

Occasionally however the author adopts older lines into his works with slight modifications.

1. Ibid., Fifth act, p 113.
2. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 114.
3. Udgātrdasānanam, Fourth act, p. 33.
4. Kaliprādurbhāvam, Fifth act, p. 9.
5. Ibid.

Thus

तस्मात्त्वं रावणो नाम्ना ख्यातो लोके भविष्यसि¹
is merely the Rāmāyaṇa line

तस्मात्त्वं रावणो नाम नाम्ना राजन् भविष्यसि²
slightly changed.

1. Udgatṛda śṣnanam, Seventh act, p. 64.
2. Uttarakaṇḍa, 16, 37. (Rāmāyaṇa)

Durgābhyudayam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Durgābhyudayam is written by Pandit Chajjiram Shastri. It is published from Delhi in 1931. It has seven acts and seventy four pages and deals with the greatness of the goddess Durgā .

PLOT

First act-In the prologue to the play Sūtradhāra (the stage manager) and Pāripārśvika are shown on the stage carrying a discussion about a king who was roaming about in the forest after he was defeated by his enemies and was deprived of his wife, children and wealth. They also disclose that when the king came near the hermitage of a sage, his mind became full of peace. There he met a Vaiśya who also lost everything like him (the king). Vaiśya's sons and daughters had deserted him, still he remembered them and could not get mental peace. The king wants to console him but his words have no effect on the Vaiśya because he himself is inflicted by similar worries. After some time they both go to the sage to hear some good words from him and obtain mental peace. They seek his advice and the sage tells them that nothing on earth can give them peace except the devotion to Bhagavatī. She is the source of all happiness. She saves man from committing sin. A man forgets everything else when he is deeply devoted to Mother. In the act proper Brahmā comes and asks the demons as to why they are trying to kill him. They say that this is their nature to be jealous of religious persons and love the sinners. Brahmā, seeing no other way out prays to Viṣṇu for help. While he is praying the demons go away to some other place. A voice from above announces that he should praise Yoganidrā because she is pleased with him and would bless him with whatever he wishes. Brahmā then praises Yoganidrā. Yoganidrā is the power of Viṣṇu. She announces from above that Viṣṇu is ready to help him. Brahmā then approaches Viṣṇu and asks for help. Meanwhile the demons had fled away from the scene. Accompanied by Viṣṇu Brahmā challenges demons to come before him and become a prey to Viṣṇu's wrath. Both Madhu and Kaiṭabha come to him and insult him but when they see that Viṣṇu has got immense power they both are afraid and try to escape but Viṣṇu kills them. Brahmā is very happy at this. Viṣṇu is

called Madhukaiṭabhāri after this incident. Brahmā praises Viṣṇu for killing those powerful demons. He wants to know as to how he killed Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Viṣṇu tells him that he would relate the whole story before his beloved Ramā.

Second act — In the Viṣkambhaka it is informed that Mahiṣāsura has defeated the whole army of the deities and lord Indra is worried about this. In the act proper Indra discusses the problem of Mahiṣāsura with other deities. They all want to go to Brahmā and discuss with him the Mahiṣāsura problem. They go to him (Brahmā) and tell him that they are worried on account of the demons. Brahmā assures them that their worry would be over soon because Viṣṇu has gone to Śiva to consult him about this matter. They should also go there and find out as to what transpires there.

On the other hand, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra are discussing the problem of demons. Indra tells Viṣṇu that demons aspire to conquer heaven. They have an eye on 'Kalpataru' and 'Kāmadhenu'. Not only this, they insult the celestial ladies too. Viṣṇu consoles Indra and tells him that from now on, the deities should have no worry because he (Viṣṇu) and Śaṅkara have decided to kill the demon chief Mahiṣa. Viṣṇu tells them that all the deities should transfer a part of their energy to a woman form and make it the all-powerful one. That power in a womanly form would be able to kill the demon Mahiṣa. Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, Yama, Soma, Indra, Varuṇa, Pṛthvī, Brahmā, Sūrya, Vasus, Kubera, Agni, Sandhyā, Vāyu and Samudra all give a part of their energy to the womanly form and a Devī having the powers of all the deities appears gleamingly before them. All the deities are very happy to see her. They all praise her and request her to destroy their enemies. Devī assures them of all help and tells them that they should go to their respective places and feel comfortable there.

Third act — Nārada describes in meticulous details the killing of Mahiṣāsura by Bhagavatī. He also informs Indra that Bhagavatī first ruthlessly killed the demons but they again rose and started fighting. Finally when she used divine weapons (Divyāstras) only then could they die. Nārada also tells him about the treachery of Mahiṣāsura who threatened the Gaṇas of Devī by assuming different forms. Sometimes he fought assuming the form of a lion and sometimes that of a human being. Meanwhile it is informed that Devī has killed Mahiṣāsura and has ended the worry of the deities. Devī then herself appears before Indra and offers him a seat. Indra praises Devī and Devī is pleased with his praise and assures him that she would help him

whenever he may need it.

Fourth act—All the deities have sent a messenger to Indra to inform him that they are all very much oppressed by two demons named Śumbha and Niśumbha. Indra sends the messenger back telling him that he is waiting for all the deities and they should all come and discuss with him personally about this problem. When the deities come to him he reminds them that none else than Bhagavatīdevī can protect them. She should be praised and if she is pleased everything will be all right. He further tells them that Bhagavatī herself has assured him that whenever he is in trouble he should remember her and that she will destroy their enemies. The deities then go to the Himālayas and praise her there. In a short while the goddess appears before them. She assures them that just as she destroyed Mahiṣāsura in the same way she would destroy Śumbha and Niśumbha too and that they should have no anxiety on this score and go back peacefully to their respective places. Meanwhile Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa who are the spies of Śumbha catch sight of Bhagavatī. They take her to be an ordinary woman and go to report to their Lord Śumbha about her.

Fifth act—Both Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa report about the presence of a beautiful woman in the Himālayas to their Lord Śumbha. Śumbha also thinks Bhagavatī to be an ordinary woman and sends Śugrīva, a messenger, to convey to her the message that Śumbha, the chief of demons, wants to enjoy her company. The messenger goes to Devī Bhagavatī and relates to her what Śumbha had said. Devī immediately understands the treachery of the demons but she tells the messenger that she would marry only that man who is able to defeat her in battle. The messenger cannot believe that such a beautiful and delicate lady can fight with such terrible demons as Śumbha and Niśumbha. He wants to take her by force but when Devī shows her 'Kālikā' (furious) form the messenger makes good his escape.

On the other hand Śumbha is eagerly waiting for the messenger. He expects bad news because his left eye is throbbing. After a short-while Śugrīva comes with the bad news that Devī has not only repudiated his proposal but has insulted the whole demon race. Śumbha is furious to hear this. He sends Dhūmrālocana, his army chief, to bring Devī to his place. Dhūmrālocana accompanied by huge army proceeds to bring Devī but she destroys him and the whole of the army. When Śumbha is informed about his death he sends Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa to engage Devī in a fight and himself proceeds to meet Niśumbha to inform him about the whole incident.

Sixth act— Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa come to fight against Devī. Devī humorously tells her followers that Dhūmrālocana has died. Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa too will meet with the same fate. This is exactly what happens. Both Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa are killed in the battlefield. When Śumbha learns about this tragedy he is terribly shocked. Meanwhile a messenger from Bhagavatī comes with a letter which reads that the demons should go to nether region if they want to live, otherwise every one of them would be killed. Śumbha is beside himself with rage at this. He wants to arrest the messenger but his minister restrains him from doing this. At last Śumbha sends his younger brother Niśumbha to the battlefield but he (Niśumbha) too meets with the same fate. Though faced with such calamities and continuous defeats Śumbha still entertains a feeble hope of victory and himself prepares to leave for the battlefield.

Seventh act— Two Gandharvas, Sprhaṇīya and Darśanīya describe the fierce battle between Bhagavatī and Śumbha. After heavy fighting Bhagavatī kills Śumbha. The whole world rejoices when the news spreads about the death of that demon. Indra praises Devī Bhagavatī with utmost devotion. Devī is very much pleased with him (Indra) and blesses him. Indra then utters the Bharatavākya and with that the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Mother Goddess — The present play is a mythological one. It depicts the efficacy of devotion to the Mother Goddess which can lead to the fulfilment of all desires and to the destruction of evil symbolized by demons. The mother Goddess represents in herself the cumulative power of all the gods.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The present play has a pleasant and racy style. The writer has composed it in the best of the styles of Sanskrit drama. It makes a delightful reading. It is peculiar of the writer of the present play only to combine in himself the mastery over the difficult jargon of the Navyanyāya and the charming language of poetry. He is himself conscious of this and says in the beginning of his work:

कर्कशे तर्कविषये कोमले कान्यवस्तुनि ।

समं लीलायते तस्य छज्जूरामस्य भारती ॥¹

Chajjūrāma, whose speech is equally facile in the hard science of logic as also the delicate poetic composition."

1. First act, p. 3.

The author is justly proud of his poetic skill:

छज्जुरामकृतौ नैकः स श्लोकः परिदृश्यते ।

अल्पानल्पथवा काचिद्यत्र नैव चमत्कृतिः ॥¹

"In the work of Chajjūrāma there cannot be found even one such verse wherein there may not be some charm, much or little."

One of the verses as given below will bear out what has been stated above:

या भीकरी शुभकरी परमा च माया

तां ज्ञातुमिच्छसि यदि त्वमनन्तशक्त्याः ।

भक्त्या स्वभक्तदुरितौघविखण्डिकायाः

पादारविन्दयुगलं स्मर चण्डिकायाः ॥²

"The great Māyā is awe-inspiring and beneficent. If you want to know her then you should meditate on the lotuslike feet of hers who wields endless power and destroys the multitude of evils of her devotees."

Sometimes the author composes such verses as embody in them some fundamental truth or general principles :

सुखं च दुःखं च सर्वदेवात्र नास्ति कस्यापि भावयित्वा ।

दशां हि लोकस्य चक्रनेमिक्रमेण शोच्यं न लक्षयित्वा ।

बलेन कालस्य दुर्बलोपि बलिष्ठमप्यत्र जेतुमीशः

मनुष्यमात्रस्य कैव गाथा इदन्तु सहते स्वयं सुरेशः ॥³

"There is no happiness or sorrow for a man for all time. The condition of the world is not pitiable, for it moves like the felly of the wheel of the chariot. With these thoughts (one can appreciate the fact that) in this world even a weak man can score a victory over the powerful one. Not to speak of the ordinary human beings even lord Indra himself has to undergo this,"

विचार्य बहुभिर्बुद्ध्या सुध्यातं किल कल्पते ।

यत्तदेव फलत्याशु कार्यमित्यवधार्यताम् ॥⁴

"One should keep in mind that whatever is properly considered after consultations with many that action alone yields fruit quickly."

कृता दुरात्मनां व्यर्था कथापि जनयत्यघम् ।

श्रेयस्कामयमानैः तज्जनैः सा परिहीयताम् ॥⁵

1. First act, p. 3.

2. First act, p. 10.

3. Second act, p. 23.

4. Second act, p. 24.

5. Second act, p. 28.

"Even a cursory talk of the wicked leads to evil. So those who desire good should desist from it."

These words themselves speak out the emotions they depict :

अलीकवाचाल वृथातिगवित
त्वमात्थ यत्सर्वमहं विलोकये ।
गृहाण शस्त्रं निगृहाण वाङ्मयं
जहीहि मानं जहि मां पुरःस्थिताम् ॥¹

"O you liar, babbler, unnecessarily proud, I see whatever you say. Pick up a weapon, hold your tongue, shed off your pride and kill me who am standing before you."

असज्जनानामुदयाद्विरस्मि सतां जनानामथ पर्वतोऽस्तः ।
न्यायेतराचारविधिप्रवृत्तासुराग्रगण्यः सुहृदां शरण्यः ॥²

"I am the rising mountain for the wicked as also the setting mountain for the good. I, the refuge of the friends, am the foremost among the demons engaged in activities other than just."

Elegant and charming, the language of the work has an appeal of its own. It is generally free from any marked grammatical inaccuracy. It is only in a couple of places that one meets with lapses, one of which concerns itself with hiatus in the *pāda* itself: *pāpaṇ ca apamṛtyavaḥ*³, much against the established convention while the others concern themselves with the use of the *parasmaipada* in *didṛkṣati*⁴, *saṅgamiṣyati*⁵ (used twice) and *yatantu*⁶ where more appropriately *ātmanepada* should have been used by *pāṇ*. *jñāśrusmṛdṛśām sanah, samo gamyrcchibhyām* and *anudāttarita ātmanepadam* (✓ *yat* is *anudāttet* and therefore *ātmanepadī*) respectively.

The language of the work is characterized by excessive alliteration. The author is himself conscious of his power of creating a jingle of words. He is proud of this achievement of his and asks, 'who is there today who can equal Chajjūrāma in a composition marked by alliteration? Not only this. Even in earlier times there may have existed some or not. If there were, only two or three were such poets':

1. Seventh act, p. 65.
2. Sixth act, p. 60.
3. First act, p. 11.
4. Third act, p. 40.
5. Fifth act, p. 53; Seventh act, p. 70
6. Seventh act, p. 74.

अनुप्रासिनि सन्दर्भे छज्जुरामसमोऽद्य कः ।

पुराप्यासन्न चेदासन् द्वित्रा एव कवीश्वराः ॥ 1

That this is not an empty boast is proved by even a cursory look at the work. We meet with alliteration and rhyme at every step. Words similar in sound follow each other in quick succession and leave a lasting impression on the mind. A few examples will bear us out:

- (क) अये तस्मात्परमदारुणात् रणात् परं विश्रान्तोऽहमत्यङ्गमङ्गविकलो जातः ।²
- (ख) परस्परं युद्धोन्मुखेषु वीरप्रमुखेषु महिषासुरसैन्यं प्रति जन्यं कर्तुं समरतं मया प्रशस्तं गतदैर्घ्यं देवसैन्यं प्रहितम् । परन्तु प्रबलेन तद्वलेन सर्वास्माकं सेना दीनदीना बलहीना कृता ।³
- (ग) विश्वरः कैश्चिदसुरैः परिवृतोऽश्वर्वेण गर्वेण विराजमानो मानोन्नतः क्रूरदृष्ट्या शर-वृष्ट्या च देवीमाच्छिदत् ।⁴
- (घ) अस्ति काचन सर्वजनतोषा, अपरेव सितपक्षदोषा, स्त्रीमात्रकान्तिमोषा योषा ।⁵
- (ङ) भगवतीशुम्भयोः सिंहनादं श्रुत्वा समागतानेकमातङ्गकुरङ्गहयक्षकृक्षशृगालकोल-कोलाहलाहूतभूतवेतालकण्ठनालप्रकटीभवद्घोरचीत्कारचमत्कारयुक्तेयं समरभूमिरव-लोक्यते । तयोरेव सक्रोधपादन्यासप्रभूतभूतकम्पेन च सालरसालप्रियालतमाल-हिन्ता लसुरदारकोविदारकर्णिकारनिम्बकदम्बवकुलनिचुलखजू रबीजपूरमधुकबन्धुक-कपित्थाश्वत्थवृक्षाः परिपतन्ति ।⁶

The last paragraph is a good example, though a solitary one, of long compounds reminiscent of the style of the old prose works.

The work shows a number of *stotras* in praise of Yogamāyā or Durgā. Not only this, their *māhātmya* is given along with some of them, as for example, the praise of Yogamāyā is followed by the verses.

देवीस्तोतुर्जगद् वश्यं सर्वे नश्यन्त्युपद्रवाः ।

मानं धनं च सत्पुत्रं कलत्रं भवति ध्रुवम् ॥

ऋणरोगादिदारिद्र्यं पापञ्च अपमृत्यवः ।

हूरादेव पलायन्ते नीहारा भास्करादिव ॥⁷

1. First act, p. 4.
2. Second act, p. 22.
3. Second act, p. 25.
4. Third act, p. 36.
5. Fifth act, p. 49.
6. Seventh act, p. 67.
7. First act, pp. 19-20.

"Him who praises Devī the whole world obeys; all his difficulties disappear, he surely wins respect, wealth, wife and good son. Indebtedness, disease, etc., and poverty as also sin and untimely death run away from him even from afar like the mist from the Sun.'

The most prominent figures of speech in the play are *Upamā* and *Utprekṣā*. An example of the latter is particularly delightful and bears reproduction here:

ग्रहन्तु मन्ये

इमं कर्तुं चन्द्रमसं तद्वक्त्रसदृशं विधिः ।

पञ्चद्वितीयभेदेन करोति विकरोति च ॥¹

"Methinks the creator out to create the moon having the resemblance of her face creates it and destroys it in the form of the two fortnights."

The play has no *Vidūṣaka*; not even humour. The predominant sentiment in it is the heroic. It depicts the destruction of the demons *Mahiṣa*, *Śumbha* and *Niśumbha*. The actual battles, in line with the rules of dramaturgy are never shown on the stage. They are told through somebody, sometimes the reporter (the spies), sometimes the *Gandharvas*. In dramatic technique the work follows the older plays except of course the prologue which has been stretched to cover 13 pages. It is perhaps the longest one among the Sanskrit plays.

The one point of adverse criticism against the play is that it has little dramatic element in it. The audience never finds itself in an expectant mood, no suspense is there, no turns and twists in the story.

But on the whole the play is quite readable and leaves good impression on the mind.

1. Fifth act, p. 49.

Naladamayantiyam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Naladamayantiyam is written by Kalipada Tarkācārya and is published by Sanskrit Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, in the year 1332, Bengal era.

First act— King Nala has got the portrait of Damayantī and is very much attracted by it. He wants to convey his love to his beloved but is helpless. His friend Vidūṣaka knows that he (the king) is suffering from the pangs of separation. So he tries to cheer him up by imitating the voice of a lady. The king mistakes him for Damayantī and this defeats the very purpose of the Vidūṣaka, viz, to humour the king. After sometime they go to a lake where they happen to see a golden swan. The king wants to catch it and makes several attempts. The swan gives the slip to the king a number of times. The king therefore tells the Vidūṣaka that he alone is unable to catch it and that he (Vidūṣaka) should help him. Both of them then catch hold of the swan who entreats them for release as a compensation for which however it would bring him into contact with Damayantī, the princess of Vidarbha.

Second act— Kali himself wants to marry Damayantī. When he is informed by Kāmadeva that the four gods also have a desire to marry her and have sent Nala as their messenger to her (Damayantī) he (Kali) wants to create a mischief. He sends Kāmadeva to the very place where Nala has gone (to Damayantī to convey the message of the gods) to foil his mission and himself goes to Niṣadha country to incite Nala's younger brother Puṣkara against him (Nala). On the other hand Damayantī is shown to be very much worried on account of her separation from Nala. She has heard his praise from the golden swan. She with her friend is gathering flowers when Nala reaches there. He has got the power of being invisible and so is able to hear unnoticed all that transpires between her and her friend. After some time disclosing his identity he roams in the garden. Both Damayantī and her friend are surprised to see him there because no outsider can enter that. They think that some Devadūta has come there. Nala says that he has come to her with a message of the gods. The gods want that she should marry

one of them. Damayantī is furious at this and requests Nala to save her from that unenviable situation. She falls into swoon after hearing this. Nala brings water and helps Damayantī to regain her consciousness. When she comes to her own she pleads with Nala that he should go to the gods and tell them that Damayantī can accept none else than Nala as her husband. Nala wants to clarify that she would be more happy if she becomes the wife of a god. But Damayantī is adamant. Nala leaves the place saying that he would convey her message to the gods. It is at this moment that Damayantī and her friend realize that the person with whom they were just talking is no one else than king Nala himself.

Third act—Vidūṣaka informs that Damayantī has married Nala in spite of the heavy pressure from the gods. Though gods have appreciated this act of Damayantī Kali is very much upset and wants to avenge the insult to him. He curses her that she would not be able to enjoy Nala's company for long. He assists Puṣkara, the younger brother of Nala, as a result of which Nala loses to Puṣkara everything including his kingdom in gambling and is now going to forest with his wife Damayantī. Then king Nala with the queen Damayantī is shown leaving his kingdom. Every one is in tears and wants to accompany them though Nala says that they all should be loyal to their new king. But no one is willing to serve the new king. Wretched Kali does not rest here and wants to torture the royal couple further. He plans to separate Nala from Damayantī. Nala has nothing left with him. So when he sees golden birds flying above his head he tries to catch them by spreading the only cloth he has got. The birds are imaginary and are the creation of Kali. They fly taking the cloth of king Nala. He is very much distressed at this incident. He knows that there are many difficulties in living in a forest.

Fourth act—Nala tells Damayantī that the wretched Kali has pledged to separate them both, so it is better for Damayantī to go to her father's place. But Damayantī requests him that he should not leave her alone. At night both of them sleep under one cloth. When Nala notices that the tired Damayantī is sleeping soundly he tears off half of Damayantī's saree and slips away stealthily. At one time he thinks that he has not treated Damayantī fairly by leaving her alone in the forest but at the second thought he thinks that she is a princess and has been brought up in luxury. She would not be able to bear the tortures of forest life. Kali tries to take him away from Damayantī but Viveka (Nala's conscience) does not allow him to leave his legally wedded wife. At last the vicious plans of Kali come out

successful and Nala goes away leaving the sleeping Damayantī behind. After he goes a distance Nala hears the heart-rending cries of the Karkoṭaka serpent who is dying in the fire. No one is there to protect it. Nala has no interest left in life so he comes forward to protect it. On the other side when Damayantī wakes up she does not find Nala. She is perplexed as to where he has gone. But time passes by and Nala does not return, Damayantī is very sad and thinks that Nala has left her for ever.

Fifth act — Damayantī is mad with worry and is roaming about here and there looking for Nala. But he is nowhere to be seen. Sometimes she feels that he is coming and is happy but after a while when she notices that he has not turned up her faith is shattered. As she is roaming about a big black serpent tries to kill her. She is terribly frightened but at that very time a Kirāta comes over there and saves her by killing the serpent but after killing it he begins making advances towards her. She protests but he does not listen to her. Attracted by the cries of Damayantī the leader of the Kirātas comes there and saves her. He condemns that Kirāta and punishes him. He assures Damayantī that she is just like his daughter and that he will take every care of her. It is he who safely sends her to her father's house.

Sixth act — While working as horseman in the stable of king Ṛtuparna, Nala feels penitent for having been so cruel to his beloved and devoted wife. He thinks that even the cruellest of men would not permit himself such a crime as he has committed. Vidūṣaka, his friend, comes to him after a hard search. Though Nala's appearance has changed somewhat yet he is able to recognize him (Nala). He keeps this fact to himself and shows as if he has not recognized him. He informs Nala that Damayantī is again going to have her Svayamvara. Nala is shocked to know this but as he does not want to reveal his identity, he has to suppress his mental agony. Vidūṣaka tells king Ṛtuparna that Bhīma (Damayantī's father) has invited him in the Svayamvara of his daughter and that he has only one day's time to reach there. Nala knows the art of driving fast. He says that he can take Ṛtuparna to Bhīma in a day. This removes Vidūṣaka's last vestige of doubt about Nala's identity. He is happy that at last he is successful in locating his friend.

Seventh act — Nala is sad to hear that Damayantī who used to sacrifice everything for him is now prepared for remarriage. He has to accompany king Ṛtuparna to the parental place of Damayantī where once he was the main figure. It is impossible for him even to think that Damayantī would

choose another husband. After reaching that place he is once again reminded of all the past incidents. Here Vidūṣaka has arranged for his surprise meeting with his son Indrasena. While playing a buffalo comes to trouble the child. Nala comes to his rescue and when he asks as to whose son he is the child utters his own (Nala's) name. Nala has a pleasant surprise when he finds that his son is full of praise for his father (himself). His son's words no doubt provide him with a little bit of consolation that Damayantī still loves him. It is she who has taught her son all that he has spoken. But the mystery still remains, if Damayantī still loves him, why then has she agreed for her second marriage. He (Nala) tries to enrage Indrasena by condemning the character of Nala but Indrasena becomes furious and wants to settle this dispute by sword. At that very moment Damayantī's father Bhīma and other courtiers come and tell Nala that they are happy to meet him again. All that happened was due to fate which nobody can change. Vidūṣaka also embraces him very affectionately. Nala is overjoyed to meet his old friend. Vidūṣaka tells the whole story about Damayantī—what happened to her in the forest and how with the help of a Kirāta leader she was able to reach her parents. Nala and Damayantī also meet after a long time. Now everything becomes clear to Nala. All this act of remarriage was nothing but a ruse to locate him (Nala). Ṛtuparna is happy that Nala and Damayantī are together again. Kali and Nala's younger brother Puṣkara also come and apologize for their misbehaviour. Puṣkara says that Nala should take his kingdom back and forgive him for his misdeeds. Everyone is happy to hear that Nala has again obtained all that he had lost due to adverse fate. In this happy consummation the drama comes to an end.

The difference between Nalopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata and the story of the Naladamayantīyam — Here it would be pertinent to examine the question as to what is the difference between the plot of Nalopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata and the plot of our present drama.

The aim of our playwright is to make the plot more appealing to the modern reader. So some changes have been made here and there in the plot and these add charm to the drama and make it appear more natural. We find a pleasant touch of imagination combined with Puranic facts.

In the Nalopākhyāna when Nala plays the part of a messenger, he gives his true introduction to Damayantī, suggests to her that she should choose one of the gods as her husband while Damayantī says that she has

chosen Nala as her husband. She even suggests that he should come in the Svayaṃvara with the gods, disguised all as a god; if her love is true she will recognize him. In the present drama though Nala comes to convey the message of the gods he does not disclose his identity to Damayantī. Damayantī also says nothing to him. She only conveys through her friend that she loves Nala and no one else. This change has brought to both the characters of Nala and Damayantī some gracefulness and softness which Nalopākhyāna evidently lacks.

It seems that the dramatist is not in favour of prolonging Damayantī's stay in the forest. Terrified by the serpent and tortured by the Kirāta (who saves her from the clutches of the serpent) Damayantī is saved by the leader of the Kirātas and is respectfully escorted to her parents' place. In the Nalopākhyāna Damayantī roams about in vain from one place to another in the forest in search of Nala. She goes from one hermitage to another to enquire about his whereabouts. Restless Damayantī reaches Cedirāja where the queen mother gives her shelter and treats her affectionately. On the other hand when Vidarbharāja comes to know about the calamity that has fallen on Nala and Damayantī he sends a few Brāhmaṇas all over the country to search for Damayantī. A Brāhmaṇa who reaches Cedi finds Damayantī living there least knowing that she is in her auntie's house.

The third change which the writer of the present drama has introduced is the pleasant meeting of Nala with his son Indrasena. Disguised Nala has come to Vidarbha as a charioteer of king Rtuṣarna. Vidūṣaka knows that he is the real Nala and arranges his meeting with his son Indrasena. While Indrasena is playing, a buffalo interrupts him and wants to attack him. Nala hears somebody saying that Indrasena is in danger. He reaches the spot and clears that buffalo out of Indrasena's way. Then starts the dialogue between them. Nala condemns the character of Nala (i.e. himself) but Indrasena is furious to hear this attack on his father. He wants to settle this matter with sword.

It seems that the author has very much in mind the scene of Duṣyanta's meeting his son Bhārata, and Rāma's his sons Lava and Kuśa when he introduces the meeting of Nala with his son Indrasena. By this change he is able to show that before meeting Damayantī Nala's doubt about Damayantī is very much cleared.

Another change introduced by the playwright is with reference to

Puṣkara. Wretched Puṣkara (younger brother of king Nalā) of Nalopākhyāna is shown as a noble man otherwise but is hypnotized by Kali to do all the wrong he does in the Naladamayantīyam. He is a good man at heart and sometimes he feels that he is doing wrong but Kali prevents him from doing the right thing. After Nala has lost everything in gambling and has left for the forest, Puṣkara feels sorry for all that he has done. He wants to return everything to Nala but under the influence of Kali is unable to do so. In Nalopākhyāna Nala returns to his kingdom after staying in the forest and wants that they should again indulge in gambling so that he may be able to regain his kingdom but Puṣkara quarrels with him and condemns him. Nala has to fight against his younger brother to regain his kingdom but in Naladamayantīyam Puṣkara himself comes to Vidarbha to pay his respects to his elder brother, apologizes and returns to him respectfully the kingdom he had wrongly obtained. This incident raises him above the ordinary human level.

CHARACTERIZATION

Nala — Nala of Naladamayantīyam is like Duṣyanta of Kālidāsa. As Duṣyanta forgets about Śakuntalā on account of Durvāsas' curse so does Nala forget Damayantī due to the curse of the powerful Kali. Damayantī had to incur Kali's wrath on account of her refusal to marry him. Kali curses her that she would not be able to enjoy the company of her beloved for a long time. By introducing this anecdote of the curse the writer has removed the blot on Nala's character.

When faced with the duty of a messenger he forgets everything about his own self. He knows that he cannot live without Damayantī but still like a dutiful messenger he says to Damayantī :

नलः— भद्रे अलमनया मयि दैवतबुद्ध्या, नाहं देवः, परं देवानां दूतरूपेणोपस्थितो
मानुष एवास्मि । तदिदानीं देवादेशमाकर्णयितुमर्हसि ।¹

At another place when he learns that Damayantī has arranged for remarriage he does not condemn Damayantī but confesses that all that happening is due to his fault only :

नलः—(स्वगतम्) अहो धर्मपत्नीं परित्यज्य सञ्चितो मया महानेव प्रशस्तिवादः, आप्रलयं
कीर्तिरियं नलस्य पृथिव्यां प्रचरिष्यति । हा धिक् कष्ट'! पातितो मया कलङ्ककालिमा
सुधाकर निम्मले सुधाकरकुले । अथवा अनुरूपमेव कृतं मया शशाङ्कगोत्रस्य ।²

1. Second act, p. 49.

2. Sixth act, p. 112.

'Nala (*to himself*) Oh, I have earned great fame by forsaking my wife. This fame of Nala will continue to spread on the earth till doomsday. Oh, how sad, I have thrown the darkness of infamy on the pure race of the moon. Or I have acted in such a way as to be worthy of the race of the moon."

Damayantī—*Damayantī*, the heroine, chooses her husband herself. But she cannot enjoy her married life with him for long. She has to live with her parents after he leaves her in the forest. This incident reminds us of Śakuntalā living alone in the forest after Duṣyanta had refused to recognize her as his wife. Both *Damayantī* and Śakuntalā act on their own in selecting their husbands but both have to live without them for a long time. Fortunately both are reunited with their husbands and lead a happy married life thereafter.

Damayantī's main concern is to find out the whereabouts of Nala by whatever means she can. She also knows that though Nala has left her he loves her so much that he cannot tolerate the idea of her being married to another person. By the announcement for remarriage he would surely appear on the scene, so she thinks. Her trick works and both the husband and the wife are united happily once again.

Damayantī is a true ideal of Indian womanhood. She prefers death to life without her husband. Her bravery, loyalty and truthfulness have won her eternal fame.

Praśāntaratnākaram

INTRODUCTORY

Praśāntaratnākaram is published by the Sanskrit Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta in 1939. The author, Kalipada, calls the present work a play, but it is doubtful whether it completely fulfils the requirements of a play. It would be better to take it an experiment in new dramatic technique which the writer has adopted here. The play is based on the story as related in the Ayo-dhyākāṇḍa of the Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa. It also has for its basis, the Kṛttivā-sarāmāyaṇa of Bengal. The author has, no doubt, so transformed the character of the hero and has so thoroughly changed the incidents connected with him that he seems to have assumed a new form at his hands. The present play bears an indelible imprint of the author and though based on an old and hackneyed theme, has sufficient originality in it to interest the present day critic. The turns and twists which have been given to the story, make it look refreshingly charming.

The play was first published serially in the monthly organ of the Sanskrit Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta. One of the notable characteristics of it is the total absence of Prakrits in it. All the characters in it use Sanskrit.

PLOT

First act—In a famine-stricken region, Ratnākara goes from door to door in search of food which is denied to him. He feels very sad at the thought of his parents, his wife and son being oppressed with hunger. He feels extremely upset and angry when in spite of all his wanderings for the whole of the day, he is not able to procure anything to satisfy his own and his dependents' hunger. He is very angry with those who are rich but do not like to part with their riches. For a moment, he feels that he should better relieve the rich of their wealth and distribute it among the poor and also satisfy the hunger of his family. But his conscience does not allow him to do so. He restrains his extremist thoughts. Then Sumati, a girl (personifying good thoughts) sings a song from behind the curtain. This song, too, dissuades him from adopting the wrong path. But the hard realities of life and the cruel nature of the world make him so sad that he wants to commit suicide by hanging himself with a piece of cloth tied to a tree. The moment he is

trying to put these thoughts into practice, he hears the cry of a woman who is being oppressed by a dacoit. The lady puts off all her ornaments and hands them over to the dacoit. But this does not satisfy the wicked person and he tries to satisfy his lust by using force on her. When he is about to commit the crime, Ratnākara appears on the scene and saves the honour of the girl. In an encounter he injures the dacoit who happens to be the leader of a big gang. Being impressed with the courage of Ratnākara, the dacoit wants him to take charge of his gang. He further advises him that by taking to dacoity, he would be able to get rid of his extreme poverty and would be able to lead a rich and contented life. Ratnākara agrees. He feels that in this way he would be able to help other poor families. Both of them, then, become staunch friends and prepare a scheme to kill their king Kāmeśvara on account of whose wicked deeds the public is suffering from extreme poverty. They think that by removing him (the king) from the throne, it would be possible for them to provide adequate food to the needy and all hunger and want in the kingdom would disappear.

Second act—This act is laid in the royal court. The very face of the king reveals harshness, wickedness and his evil nature. It is on account of him that this country is stricken with famine. He is so engrossed with his pleasures that he has no time to look after the welfare of his subjects. His people are suffering from acute hunger and want. When the things reach a climax, a Brāhmaṇa comes to him and on account of his oppressive hunger, curses him that his entire kingdom would be destroyed. Kāmeśvara listens to all this and in his heart of hearts feels too that he is himself responsible for what is going on in his kingdom but does not try to find a way out of the difficulties of the subjects and goes to Līlāvati, his beloved.

Līlāvati is a very beautiful lady who had become widow in her very childhood. The king happens to see her and being charmed with her beauty wants to marry her. Līlāvati's father does not like this. The king plots his murder and brings Līlāvati to his harem forcibly and spends most of his time in her company. Even while he is with Līlāvati, the news comes to him that the royal officers have burnt the hutments of the poor who could ill afford to pay taxes. The king pays no heed to it. He remains busy with his pleasures as before. He bestirs himself only when he comes to know that Viśvāvasu, the goldsmith who was coming to Līlāvati with a necklace of diamonds, has been put behind the bars under the orders of the Chief Queen.

Third act—Ratnākara arranges to send a forged letter to Kāmeśvara wherein Simhavarman, the incharge of a hill fort, makes an unusual request for the immediate reinforcements of the royal army on account of his having been attacked by enemies. Actually it is Ratnākara who has written this letter and not Simhavarman. The ignorant king however thinks it to be genuine and orders his entire army to reach the fortress to save Simhavarman.

Now finding the field clear, Ratnākara enters into the royal palace on a dark night and breaks through the royal treasure and makes away with it. He destroys many other things, too. The king is highly angry at this and swears that he would teach Ratnākara a lesson.

Fourth act—Earlier, when Ratnākara was supporting himself and his dependents by begging alms, he had come to incur a debt of Rs. 200/- which he had to pay to the creditor. Now, when he comes to acquire wealth Ratnākara's father Cyavana and his son Ātreya, come to him to pay off the debt. On an enquiry from his father as to from where he could acquire such wealth, Ratnākara says that a rich friend of his has given him this money as help. He does not want to say any such thing as may lead him to trouble afterwards.

Now it so happens that as Cyavana and Ātreya are handing over the money to the moneylender, the royal spies standing near-by, become suspicious and come to think that they have some connection with the gang of thieves. The policemen catch hold of them and give them a good thrashing to know from them their source of money.

Just as the police is torturing the father and the son, Ratnākara arrives on the scene with a group of his supporters and kills the policemen and brings the father and the son (who had become senseless having been mercilessly whipped) to the newly established city of Ratnapura.

Fifth act— This act introduces us to a dialogue between Sumati and Durmati. Sumati personifies truth, non-violence, co-operation, world brotherhood and clemency etc., while Durmati personifies violence, murder, cruelty, theft and dacoity etc. Durmati is very happy with Ratnākara's activities, for he has chosen to follow her path. Sumati, on the other hand, feels pained at Ratnākara's downfall, but she has none the less the feeling that he would one day come to follow the right path.

The next scene is laid in Ratnapura where Ratnākara is seen telling his son that Ratnapura is a place which provides shelter and food to all the

poor and the helpless people. At that very moment, a person comes and informs Ratnākara that he has, with the help of his astrological predictions, murdered some high officers of the State. He further informs Ratnākara that king Kāmeśvara would, one day, come to the river Sarayū for a pleasure trip in boats, and that would provide him with the opportunity to capture him. Ratnākara readily accepts the plot and prepares to execute it in right earnest, for he has to avenge the inhuman atrocities perpetrated by the king on his father and son. He deposes a person to keep company with the king and to jump into the water when the royal boat is in mid-stream. That would provide Ratnākara with the necessary opportunity to come to the rescue of the man and then to jump into the royal boat with him. *Sixth act*—Now everything turns out to be exactly the way Ratnākara had planned. Ratnākara's man jumps into the river. Ratnākara comes to his rescue and jumps into the royal boat with him and with all the members of his gang. In the encounter that ensues, the royal supporters are killed and the king is taken prisoner.

The next scene introduces us to Ratnākara's father Cyavana and his wife, who enquires from him (Cyavana) as to why he is feeling so sad, even though prosperity has come to their family on account of Ratnākara's efforts. She is not able to follow as to what worry Cyavana can have. She asks him as to why he is so listless. He was never so sad even when the family was in the midst of acute hunger and want. Cyavana first evades a direct reply but later on agrees to part with the unpleasant information that the cause of his sadness is Ratnākara himself, who has taken to dacoity. Cyavana tells his wife that he feels pained at the very thought of Ratnākara having left the path of righteousness and accepted the wrong one of dacoity and murder. He further tells her that he would gladly commit suicide if it could shock his son out of the wrong path.

Seventh act—Ratnākara brings the captive king to fulfil his vow. He is visibly very happy. The vow that he had earlier taken was that he would wash the feet of his father with the blood of Kāmeśvara. He brings Kāmeśvara to his father and binds him to a nearby tree with a rope. After this, he and his tired soldiers retire to take rest.

Eighth act—Cyavana entirely foils the plan of his son. In the darkness of the night, he unties the knot of the rope and frees Kāmeśvara. Next, he writes a letter to Ratnākara telling him that he is committing suicide, for that might possibly retrieve him and he might give up the wrong path he

has been pursuing so far. He then hangs himself on a tree and dies. Ratnākara is completely ignorant of all that has transpired in the night. The next morning, he comes to the place where he had tied Kāmeśvara. He is full of extreme happiness and joy for he has got at last the opportunity for which he had been waiting so far. He thinks that he would be able to execute the king, but to his utter surprise and dismay he finds that the entire situation has changed. He feels extremely pained at the turn the events have taken. In the meantime, his mother, wife and son, too, arrive at the place. All of them bemoan the sad death of the sage (Cyavana).

Ninth act--In the ninth act is described the death, one by one, of Ratnākara's mother, wife and son. This completely transforms Ratnākara. He is now in a chastened mood and frees Kāmeśvara who had been captured once again by his men after he had been released first by Cyavana on a dark night. He makes fine arrangement for the food and the shelter of the poor and the needy, and disbands his gang and takes a vow not to commit dacoity or murder henceforth. After he had done all this, he wants to end his life for, he cannot stand the separation of his near and dear ones. Just at that very moment, Sumati comes and consoles him. She advises him to give up all these thoughts and to have Dikṣā from a real Guru. With these words she leaves. After this, Nārada comes from heaven and gives Dikṣā to Ratnākara who, from that time onwards, begins to lead a pure and pious life.

CHARACTERIZATION

Ratnākara--As it appears from the theme of this play, Ratnākara is no other than Vālmīki. Śrī Tarkācārya has accepted Ratnākara as the earlier name of Vālmīki, and for this, he has the authority of the Bengali Rāmāyaṇa otherwise known as Kṛttivāsa Rāmāyaṇa, which has for its basis, the old Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa which records the interesting story related to Rāma by the sage Vālmīki himself. From the story we learn that Vālmīki was born in a Brāhmaṇa family but later on fell in bad company and began to commit thefts and dacoities. One day he tried to loot the seven sages. Their queries opened his eyes and on account of their company his sins were washed away. He prayed to them to show him the right path which may retrieve him from the wrong one. The sages asked him to utter the word *Marā*, the reverse of Rāma, which would deliver him from all his sins. After this, he (Vālmīki) began his meditation which continued for centuries together with the result that the ants began to make

their hills on him. When considerable time had passed in this way, the same sages passed that way and happened to hear the sound of Rāma-Rāma coming from under the mound of the earth. They awakened the sage from his *samādhi* and gave him the name of Vālmīki which literally means 'one with the ant-hills' (*valmīkas*). What happened next is well known to everybody. It is this sage Vālmīki who composed the Rāmāyaṇa.

The account of the transformation of Ratnākara, the dacoit, into Vālmīki, the sage, is also found in a portion of the Brahmavaivartapurāṇa and is also hinted at in the introductory part of the commentaries on the text of Rāmānuja and Govindarāja. This story of the early life of Vālmīki is the same everywhere with minor variations here and here among which mention may be made of the one found in Karanala according to which sage Vālmīki uttered the word *Marā* instead of *Rāma*.

Whatever the theme, this much can at least be said that the learned author has, in this play, merely adopted the outlines of the story from earlier works and has given it form and content himself. The hard-hearted Ratnākara, the hero of the old story, appears in the present play a perfect human being with human emotions and feelings. He takes to robbery not that he feels a sadistic pleasure in it, but because he wants to save his parents, wife and son from hunger and also many others like them who would have otherwise perished on account of acute hunger and want. The hero of Tarkācārya's play is very much like Robinhood of the Western world, who robs the rich and distributes their wealth among the poor for relieving their distress. The readers of the play always sympathize with him, for, whatsoever the activities he is engaged in his motives are noble and high. The playwright himself does never point out any one of his activities as good or bad though the means that he adopts for the fulfilment of his aims are undoubtedly not fair.

The sins of Ratnākara are however washed away by the penance that he practises. The evil is burnt in the fire of meditation and what remains is purity and nobility only. It is in this way that a new personality grows out of the ashes of the old which was certainly its antithesis. The new human being that appears on the scene is the sage Vālmīki.

Left to himself a man may undergo any amount of suffering and may bear it with courage and fortitude but when he has a family he may not be able to withstand his sufferings. Let us pause here and look back at the pages of history. We know that Maharana Pratap singh had a heart which

had been steeled by sufferings which no other man could have ever dared to undergo, but the same Maharana could not control himself when he found his daughter, Indira, crying for a loaf of bread. Now turning to our present play, we find Ratnākara's courage and fortitude wearing off before the sufferings his family was undergoing. This makes him sad and in moments of extreme anguish and agony, he says unto himself :

तथापि घनिकाः सर्वतो हीनान् दीनान् मन्येरन्नित्यत्र किं वा बीजं विधिनिसृष्टादर्थवैभवा-
दन्यत् ? स्मरामि हन्त स्मरामि प्रतिदिवसं पथि क्रीडतो घनिकतनुजैरलंकृतैर्दीन इति चिक्कृतस्य
वत्सस्य आत्रेयस्य मे सास्त्रं दुःखान्धकारमलिनं वदनम् । तथा स्मरामि घनिकपत्नीगणैः सुमहत्या
सम्पदा परिपूजितेन देवायतनगुरुणा तदादरव्यापृतेन दैन्यादेव प्रतिरुद्धदेवायतनप्रवेशायाः प्रियाया
माघव्या जनन्याश्च मे गभीरदुःखनिवेदनवैशसम् ।¹

"The rich think others to be poor and miserable and look down upon them. What reason may be there except the wealth that has come to them on account of the favourable fortune ? I very well remember the sad face of my son, Ātreya who was full of tears when he was contemptuously treated by the sons of the rich people. Similarly fresh is in my mind the torture of the report of the extreme sorrow of my wife, Mādhavī, and my mother whose very entry into the temple was not allowed due to poverty by the temple priest whom the wives of the rich people treated well by giving him enough money and who showed them regards."

Ratnākara puts in continued efforts for procuring alms for the whole day and still he can get nothing and feeling extremely tired, begins to take rest but he can have no mental peace even then. His conscience is troubled and he condemns himself for not fulfilling his duty. The various ideas that appear and disappear in his mind, reveal his sense of duty towards his parents, wife and child. Ratnākara is really a man with pure heart. It is only the combination of circumstances that forces him to go in for the wrong path. We reproduce below a verse which very well portrays that state of his mind when he feels highly uneasy, for, he is not able to do what he should. Thus he speaks unto himself :

त्वं तातं जननीं तथा पतिरतां पत्नीं सुतं वत्सलं
हित्वा क्षुत्परिपीडितानपि गृहे विश्राममाकाङ्क्षसि ?
धिग् धिक् त्वां निजशान्तिमात्रनिरतं जातं वृथा भूतले
प्रोत्तिष्ठ प्रतिकर्तुं मात्मकरणैः स्वेषां विषादक्रमम् ॥²

1. First act, p. 3.

2. First act, p. 5.

"Fie upon you who want to take rest while your parents, your devoted wife and your dear son, are suffering from acute hunger in your home. You, who think of your own comfort, live a futile life on the earth. Get up and remove sadness of your people by your deeds."

The character of Ratnākara, as it emerges from this play, leaves no doubt about the fact that he is a very brave and courageous man. Even Virabala, the leader of the gang of dacoits, admires his bravery and advises him to accept the leadership of the gang he has been leading so far. To quote his words :

पुरुषः— भद्र रत्नाकर, भवतः शौर्यं साहसं निपुणतां लोकोत्तरमौदार्यं विलक्षणं च कलेवरसंस्थान-
मीक्षमाणः परतन्त्रीकृतोऽस्मि प्रेमविस्मयाभ्याम् । तदाकर्ण्य यावत् समासेन कथयामि । अनन्तरितं
शात्रवद्वृत्तं विस्मृत्य कृपया श्रोतुमर्हसि ।¹

"O Brother, Ratnākara ! I am overwhelmed with surprise and love for you on account of your bravery, courage, skilfulness, excessive liberality and remarkable physical features. So please listen to what I say briefly and forget the intervening enmity."

Ratnākara looks upon another woman as his mother. He treats the lady who was being oppressed by the dacoit as his mother. He tries his level best to save her. That is why the lady develops affectionate feelings towards him and says :

भद्रस्य मातृबहुमानेन गौरवं गमिता किञ्चिदिव वक्तुमिच्छामि ।²

When the lady comes to know that her saviour is no other than Ratnākara, she comes out with the spontaneous remarks :

स्त्री— अये एष रत्नाकरः यस्य दैन्यं गतस्यापि सौजन्यप्रभवां कीर्तिं समुद्धोषयन्ति पौरजानपदाः।
अथवा कुतः खलु सुधाकरादन्यतः पीयूषवृष्टिः ।³

"Oh, is he that Ratnākara whose goodness is praised by all the people of the city even though he is so poor; or wherefrom can the showers of ambrosia come except the moon ?"

From the above analysis of Ratnākara's character, it appears quite clearly that he is essentially a good man. It is only the adverse circumstances which turn him into a bad man. He takes to dacoity and murder, but in spite of all this, the nobility does not leave him. It remains shrouded for a time but when his father commits suicide, his conscience is roused. Further, the

1. First act, p. 17.

2. First act, p. 12.

3. First act, p. 13.

sorrow of the loss of the mother, wife and the son chastens him and transforms him into the sage Vālmiki. He renounces the world and devotes himself to deep meditation.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

A very prominent writer of the twentieth century Kalipada Tarkācārya comes off Bengal which has given us a galaxy of Sanskrit playwrights. Though he has not written much—only a couple of his plays are available (out of which only two have been published in the book form)—yet whatever he has written has carved out for him a name in the history of the twentieth century Sanskrit writings. He bases his two plays, the *Naladamayantiya* and the *Praśāntaratnākaram* on the *Mahābhārata* and the Bengali *Rāmāyaṇa* of Kṛttivāsa respectively making precious little changes in the original narratives. The author imparts an allegorical touch to his works by introducing into them such abstract characters as Moha, Viveka, Dharma, Sumati and Kumati. Kali too is a personification of the age of that name and plays the most important role in the *Naladamayantiya*. It is round him that the whole drama revolves. By introducing him the poet has tried to save the character of Nala and of course of Puṣkara from the stigma that has come to attach to them. He has ascribed to Kali everything that goes wrong with the result that both Nala and Puṣkara guilty of various offences and crimes come out unsullied in the end. The introduction into the play of the *Vidūṣaka* too is the author's own innovation. He is not like any other professional jester. He is the king's true friend. He feels very sad at his separation from him and moves about in search of him. In the course of his wanderings he comes to learn that king *Ṛtuparna* has engaged a charioteer who is matchless in his line. He reaches *Ṛtuparna*'s capital and spots Nala but adroitly keeps back his identity. In this play it is through him that the message of *Bhīma* for *Damayanti*'s second *svayaṃvara* is conveyed and that too first to Nala and then to *Ṛtuparna*. In this way in the present play it is the *Vidūṣaka* who becomes instrumental in bringing Nala to the *Vidarbha* capital and consequently in uniting him with *Damayanti*—a material departure from the *Mahābhārata* narrative. Again, the present play makes Puṣkara feel penitent in the end. He apologizes to Nala and offers him back his kingdom—again a departure from the old narrative.

Even before Nala leaves her *Damayanti* comes to sense his mind. She is very much apprehensive of his intentions. By introducing the dream

sequence in the fourth act the author adds more poignancy to this apprehension. It also affords the readers a peep into the working of Nala's mind, the reasons that were prompting him to forsake poor Damayantī in the dreary forest. Again the sequence of songs sung by Moha and Viveka is symbolic of the terrible conflict raging in the mind of Nala.

This symbolism of good or bad sense, Moha or Viveka, the author employs under different names of Sumati and Kumati in the *Prasāntaratnākaram* too. A touch of allegory is more effective in giving us a psychological study, he thinks, and perhaps rightly so.

The story of *Prasāntaratnākaram* moves rather smoothly upto considerable length. Everything appears going well but then it takes a sharp turn. Quickly it descends to tragedy. The author here seems to be helpless at this. The events seem to be slipping out of his hands. He has no grip over the story. In one act (eighth) itself four deaths occur with a quickness which appears rather melodramatic. All this is to be seen in the background that the author built up the case for Ratnākara in the first seven acts. He rolled verse after verse, passage after passage, in extolling his virtues even after dire poverty had turned him a dacoit. He laid out the city of Ratnapura where all those who needed succour flocked; he never touched the poor; instead he actively helped them, he only relieved the rich of their riches to distribute them among the poor and the needy; he was only against the misrule of king Kāmeśvara whom he wanted to teach a lesson for all his past misdeeds. What was the necessity then of building up such a strong case for Ratnākara if all this was to be set against the ultra-righteousness of Cyavana who wanted to retrieve his son from the wrong path? The reader cannot help feeling here that there is too much moral intrusion here—obviously an oriental trait. Again what does the author aim at by introducing into the early part of his play descriptions, certainly most heart-rending and pathetic of abject poverty if the very efforts for the removal of which were to lead to such a consummation? Even if Ratnākara had taken to wrong path he had not done so of his own free will or for the fun of it—and even if he had to be punished should the punishment have been so heavy? There does not appear to be any dramatic justification for the misery inflicted on him. From a perusal of the work the inevitable fact stands out that Ratnākara was a miserable man even before he took to dacoity and he was a miserable man even after he had taken to it. The plain fact is that Sanskrit writers, with a few exceptions, are not adept in

writing tragedies. The tragedy in the play does not evolve. Everything here ends up so quickly.

With these comments we now pass on to the analysis of some other things in the plays. We see that the author not unoften feels pricked at the disparity in wealth. He wants the levelling up of it:

गर्वं खर्वयत प्रभावजनितं वित्तोद्वराणां मुहुः
सर्वेषां समतास्तु भूमिवलये दैन्यं लयं गच्छताम् ।
एको भूरिविलासभोगनिरतो भोज्यं विना चापरः
प्राणैरेव विद्युज्यते कथमिदं वैषम्यमालोक्यताम् ॥¹

"Remove the pride born of power of the lords of wealth. Let there be equality of all on the earth. Let poverty vanish. How can we put up with this disparity that while one is given to excessive pleasure the other dies of hunger with nothing to eat?"

So far as the language of the writer is concerned it is generally free from any grammatical or other irregularities. It is easy, flowing and chaste.

The author is expert in the depiction of pathos more than of any other sentiment. The grandfather Cyavana cannot bear the sight of his grandson Ātreya tormented by acute hunger :

एष प्रसूनदलकोमलदेहभारः
सारो मदीयहृदयस्य कृशः क्षुधार्तः ।
मूर्छामितो बत सुषुप्त इवाद्य भूमौ
ग्रन्थिं छिनत्ति मनसो मम हा हतोऽस्मि ॥²

"Oh, this emaciated (Ātreya), the very essence of my heart, with his body as soft as the heap of flowers being tormented by hunger has fallen into swoon on the earth but appears as if he were half-asleep. He cuts at the root of my heart. Oh I am ruined !"

With no food available from any quarter the child's condition further deteriorates :

आत्रेयः—ग्रहो ! शुष्कः कण्ठो मे । नार्हामि वाचमपि वक्तुम् । घूर्णते शिरः ।
क्षीणा दृष्टिः । अवशं शरीरम् । मातः, कण्ठः शुष्यति । दीयतां पानीयम्
(मूर्च्छति) ।³

1. Prāntaratnākaram, Second act, p. 34.

2. Ibid., First act, p. 24

3. Ibid., First act, p. 26.

"Ātreya—Oh my throat is parched. It is becoming difficult for me even to utter a word. My head is reeling. My eyes are getting blurred. I have lost control over the body. Mother, my throat is getting parched. Give me water (*falls into swoon*)."

The Naladamayantiyaṃ too furnishes us with a number of pathetic scenes. The most highly pathetic is the one when Damayanti wakes up to desertion by her husband. She cries in agony :

नाथ, अपि सत्यमेव गतोऽसि ? हा हताऽस्मि मन्दभागिनी । शून्यं जीर्णारिष्यं जगत्, क्व गच्छामि ? किं करोमि ? कं शरणं प्रपद्ये ? हा दमयन्ति, प्रनष्टासि, हा मूढे, कथं सचेतनासि ? यदि निद्रिता तत् कथमचिरादेव लब्धजागरासि, किमिति महानिद्रां नोपगतवती ?¹

And thus she goes on and on with all her bewailings which fill one and a half printed pages of the text.

Nala too feels equally sad and heart-broken. He loses all mental peace. He feels terribly penitent :

मन्ये मदपेक्षया हिलजन्तवो वा दस्यवो वा राक्षसा वा पिशाचादयो वा कोमलतरं हृदयं समाश्रयन्ति, नहि ते नलहतक इव एकाकिनीमर्द्धवाससं निरवलम्बां, सुषुप्तां भार्यां विपदामाकरे कान्तारे परिवर्ज्जयितुमीहन्ते । हा हा हतोऽस्मि । विपर्यस्तः संसारः । जीर्णारिष्यं जगत् । निरस्ता आशा । निरन्तरं विषज्वालापर्याकुलोऽपि न मे दग्धदेहः प्रशाम्यति ।²

"Methinks even wild animals, dacoits, demons or goblins etc., have a heart much more tender than me. Nowhere do they like to forsake their helpless wife, sleeping all alone wrapped in half a piece of cloth like wretched Nala in the forest full of so many dangers. Oh, I am ruined : The world for me has turned topsyturvy. It has turned into a desolate forest. My hope is blighted. Even though enveloped by the poisonous flames this wretched body of mine does not fall off."

But the climax is yet to come. It comes when Nala learns from the Vidūṣaka about Damayanti's second *svayaṃvara*. This proves the proverbial last straw on the camel's back. Nala feels completely helpless and broken and like the Rāma of Bhavabhūti he cries out :

स्खलति गगनाद् भास्वान् व्यस्ताः समस्तनभोग्रहाः

तिमिरमचिरात् प्रादुर्भूतं घरापरिवेष्टनम् ।

विलसति न वा तेजोलेशः क्षता जगतां मुदः

ज्वलति शिरसो ग्रन्थिस्तीव्रं विघूर्णन्ति विग्रहः ॥³

1. Naladamayantiyaṃ, Fourth act, p. 89.

2. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 106.

3. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 120

“(To me) the sun (appears to) fall from the sky, the constellations in the firmament appear all upturned. It seems as if darkness enveloping the earth has come about quickly. There does not appear to be even a streak of light. The happiness of the world has departed from it. The joints of the head are burning. The body is terribly shaking.”

The works, especially the *Naladamayantiya*, have quite a good sprinkling of passages where the author adopts the high-flown style with its abundance of longwinded compounds and complex constructions. A few of them are reproduced below by way of illustration :

(क) तदेहि यावत् इमाननाय्यनिपहाय मलयानिलनर्त्यमानतरङ्गसम्पातमधुरस्य तीरतरुस्खलितप्रसूनरसबिन्दुचन्द्रकालङ्कृततटोपान्तसलिलस्य धवलमरालमाला-सञ्चरणजटिलस्य दाडिमसरोवरस्य मणिमयसोपानिकायामुपविश्य शीतलमलयानिलेन शरीरं मानसञ्च परितर्पयावः ।¹

(ख) परिहीयतामेष दुरन्तो भावानुबन्धः, दृश्यन्तामेतानि मृदुलभुजलताललितानि तरङ्गित-वापीसलिलानि, घनचन्दनगन्धबन्धुराणि मन्दसमीरणस्पन्दानि, मदनगीतिकापय्या-कुलेनमधुकरपटलेन असकृदनुबध्यमानानि विकचसरसीरुहाणि, आतपत्रानुकारिकमलद-लान्तरालगतानि मनोहराणि च विलासवन्ति चक्रवाकमिथुनानि ।²

The poet in the writer asserts himself in the various descriptions that lie interspersed in his works. As an example we mention the following two descriptions of the dusk in the *Prasāntaratnākaram* ;

(क) दूराद्विहङ्गनिचयः समुपैति नीडं
क्षेत्रात् परापतति धेनुगणः समन्तात् ।
यात्येष संहृतकरो रविरस्तचूडं
शैलाग्रगैरिकरजोभिरिवानुलिप्तः ॥

“From afar the flock of birds returns to their nests. From all sides the herd of cows comes back from the fields. This sun withdraws its rays and goes to the top of the *Astapurvata* as if it were besmeared with the red chalk powder of the mountain peak.”

(ख) एषा भास्कररागरक्तसलिलं वासो विहाय द्रुतं
सम्भ्रान्ता सरयूः प्रयाति जलधिं कृष्णांशुकेनावृता ।

1. Ibid., First act, p. 22

2. Ibid., First act, p. 24.

3. *Prasāntaratnākaram*, First act, p. 23.

नीरे च प्रतिबिम्बितेन परितो दीपोच्चयेनाधुना
दीव्यद्रत्नमयं विभाति तदिदं कृष्णांशुकं सर्वतः ॥¹

अपि च—

शैलाद् भिन्नतया न पादपगणो ध्वान्तेन संलक्ष्यते
शैलस्यायतिरायता समभवद् भीमा च कान्ता च मे ।
यद् दृष्टं दिवसे जगत् सुविपुलं रात्रौ तदेवाधुना
संक्षिप्तं परिदृश्यते रसवतामत्रापि दिव्यं सुखम् ॥²

"This agitated Sarayū wrapped in a dark silk cloth casts off her watery cloth dyed red on account of the redness of the sun and quickly moves to the ocean. And now that dark cloth of hers appears to be made up of shining stones on account of the myriad lamps casting their reflections all over into the water.

Moreover —

On account of the darkness the trees cannot be distinguished from the mountain, the range of which both terrible and lovely, has become still more expansive. The same world which appeared so big in the daytime appears now to be shrunk. The pleasure-loving people derive divine joy even from this."

In the seventh act of this very play we have a beautiful description of the midnight too which portrays adequately all its sombreness :

यामात् परं समुदितो विधुरम्बरस्य
मध्यं गतः किरति चारुकरोपहारम् ।
निस्तब्धतामिह भुवो विहगाः कदाचिद्
भिन्दन्ति हिल्लपशवोऽपि रतैः समन्तात् ॥³

"The moon having risen after a watch comes to the centre of the sky and scatters her gifts of pleasant rays. The stillness of the earth here is disturbed all over occasionally by the sounds of the birds or the wild animals."

The author quite often embellishes his works with a number of pithy and purposeful sayings :

(क) पादपो विपुलविग्रहलम्भी सूच्यते प्रथमतः किल पत्रैः ।⁴

1. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 115.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 134.
4. Naladamayantiyam, First act, p. 2.

Cf. Hindi : होनहार बिरवान के होत चीकने पात ।

- (ख) प्राक्तनकर्मविपाको वितरति लोके सुखं दुःखम् ।¹
 (ग) दुःसाध्येन ग्रामयेन परिपीडिते यद्धि नोपकुर्वन्ति भेषजानि तत्र को वापराधो भेषजानाम् ।²
 (घ) बहिश्चेतनेष्वेवाक्रोशः फलं प्रसूते नान्तश्चेतनेषु ।³
 (ङ) यथाबद्धस्तुविनिवेदनं सुहृद्धर्मः ।⁴
 (च) वयस्य, मानसं वृत्तं मुखे प्रतिफलति ।⁵
 (छ) गुरवः स्निग्धेषु गुणमात्रदर्शिनो भवन्ति ।⁶
 (ज) को वा महात्मनि नानुरज्यति ।⁷
 (झ) अज्ञानेनापि समास्कन्दितो बह्निर्दहत्येव ।⁸
 (ञ) चक्रक्रमावर्तितनेमिसन्निभा

दशा विपर्यासमुपैति सत्वरम् ।⁹

Cp. Kalidāsa : नीचैर्गच्छत्युपरि च दशा चक्रनेमिक्रमेण ।

- (ट) परेद्यवि प्राप्यमयूरकाम्यया त्यजन्ति ये प्राप्तकपोतबालकम् ।
 वृथाधियस्ते परितो विनिन्दिता ध्रुवं परित्यज्य न सेव्यमध्रुवम् ॥¹⁰

Cp. older idiom: वरमद्य कपोतः श्वो मयूरात् ।

Also the English idiom : A bird in hand is worth two in the bush.

- (ठ) न पापमग्नस्य चिरं समुन्नतिर्नतिः कदाचित् परतो विलम्बिता ।¹¹

- (ड) मरणमुत्प्रेक्षमाणा पिपीलिकाऽपि प्रतिपक्षदंशान्न विरमति ।¹²

Among the figures of speech the author shows his *forte* in simile which not unoften is *ayoniya*. A few rather charming examples of it bear reproduction here :

- (क) मुक्तसलिलबन्धस्य सरोवरस्य सलिलप्रवाह इव सुखं ससारिणां कदाचिदागच्छति
 प्रतिनिवर्तते च ।¹³

1. Ibid., First act, p. 12.
2. Ibid., First act, p. 22.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., Second act, p. 30.
5. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 110.
6. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 134.
7. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 141.
8. *Praśāntaratnākaram*, Fourth act, p. 91.
9. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 98.
10. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 99.
11. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 100.
12. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 117.
13. *Naladamayantiya*, Third act, p. 65.

- (ख) दैवक्रमेण शुभसम्पातमन्त्रस्य दृष्टिलाभमिव मन्येथाः ।¹
 (ग) एकामेव विलम्बितामनुपदं वेणीं दधाना सती ।
 धारासिक्तविशीर्णपुष्पवलयो वल्लीव संलक्ष्यते ।²
 (घ) एकतो दुष्कृतं चौर्यमन्यतो मातृरक्षणम् ।
 सन्धौ वीरबलो भाति लोकालोक इवाचलः ॥³
 (ङ) भद्र, घनदत्ता, महालोहभारे शाकगुच्छक इव तवायं भारो नैव दुर्वहतां दधीत ।⁴
 (च) दृष्ट्वोत्तमर्णस्य मुखं सुदूराद्
 यात्यन्तरालं सहसाऽधमर्णः ।
 मन्त्रौषधिम्यामिव रुद्धवीर्यः
 सर्पो नर्ति गच्छति तत्समीपे ॥⁵
 Cp. Kālidāsa's भोगीव मन्त्रौषधिरुद्धवीर्यः ।⁶
 (छ) अहमप्येष कुपितः केशरी गजस्येव मर्कटकस्य राष्ट्रियस्य शिरसि पतामि ।⁷
 (ज) तुषानलेनेव हृदि क्षतेन
 प्रसूयते तीक्ष्णतमो विदाहः ।⁸

We would like to close our critique on the plays of Kalipada Tarkācārya with a note on the songs. They abound in his works and are as usual written in a free style characterized by excessive alliteration and rhyme. They are racy and crisp. The author himself seems to attach great importance to them. He calls a song as the last limit for all the good things of the world :
 गीतं लोके सर्वसौभाग्यसीमा ।⁹

Very often these songs are accompanied by dancing too. In Naladamayantīyam it is the abstract characters like Moha and Viveka who sing songs generally—other characters just give us an odd song here and there. In the Praśāntaratnākaram it is both the allegorical and the non-allegorical characters who give us songs. For a fuller appreciation of the quality of the songs the reproduction of at least one or two of them here is imperative :

1. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 110.
2. Ibid., Seventh act, p. 133.
3. Praśāntaratnākaram, First act, p. 20.
4. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 80.
5. Ibid., Fourth act, p. 82.
6. Raghuvaṃśam 11.
7. Praśāntaratnākaram, Fourth act, p. 95.
8. Ibid., Fifth act, p. 103.
9. Naladamayantīyam, First act, p. 2.

वसन्तकं दीक्ष्य मनो मम हि चञ्चलम् ।
 सहते नहि पिकरुतमिह कुसुमकोमलम् ॥
 एहि दयित मानस चिररञ्जिततामसे ।
 दूरे कथमसि निष्ठुर वितनु मङ्गलम् ॥¹

+ + +

एहि दयित हृदये मम किं विलम्बसे
 दूरे कथमसि नहि मयि करुणां कुरुषे ।
 विधुरञ्चति चन्द्रिकां तरुञ्चति वल्लिकाम् ।
 जलधिरेति तटिनीं मां कथमुपेक्षसे ? ।
 अघरे कुरु मधुराघरमबलामनु मुदमाहर
 नयने कुरु नयनं प्रिय किं न भाषसे ? ॥²

1. Praśāntaratnākaram, Second act. p. 49.

2. Ibid., Sixth act, p. 113.

Sāmavatam

INTRODUCTORY

In the present drama the author Ambikadatta Vyasa himself says that he has borrowed the plot of his drama from the Sāmavataprakaraṇa of the Skandapurāṇa known as 'Brahmottarakhaṇḍa'. The drama aims at propagating the importance of worship. The drama has many such scenes where we have enough of fun. As examples we may mention the description of Holi revelry, the stammering of an angry Brāhmaṇa, the playfulness of the young boys and so on. We also have here the description of heavenly peace which reigns in the hermitages of the learned sages and intense love of Sāmavatī for Sumedhas. This is one of the earliest dramas of the twentieth century.

Though the main sentiment of it is erotic yet a peculiarity of it lies in its heroine, who is neither *parakīyā* (another's wife) nor *sāmānyā* (a common woman). There is no mention of Gandharva marriage. The hero never crosses the limits of propriety. Though faced with Sāmavatī's proddings he maintains his equilibrium and does not let himself go.

PLOT

The Sūtradhāra asks the Naṭī about the drama to be staged. Naṭī wants that either of the two dramas i.e. Śākuntala and Ratnāvalī should be staged but the Sūtradhāra is reluctant to do so on the plea that they have been staged quite often. At last they decide that they should put up a new play, the Sāmavatam, before the king of Mithilā. At the request of the Naṭī the Sūtradhāra praises Mithilā, the city where Sītā, the beloved daughter of Janaka, was born.

Then appear on the stage Sārasvata and Vedamitra, the two sages, who are intimate friends and whose sons Sāmavat and Sumedhas too have great love for each other. Both Sāmavat and Sumedhas like their fathers are highly learned and well versed in all the rituals. Both are young and are of marriageable age. That is why their fathers are worried. They want that their sons should be married off but marriage is impossible without money. They both want to send their sons to the king of Vidarbha to obtain from him some money. As Sārasvata mentions this to Vedamitra his left eye throbs. The coming calamity is forecast in this manner.

However the sage repeats the name of Lord Gaṇeśa to offset the evil effect. After some time they both call their sons and tell them to proceed to Vidarbha. As they are about to start a Brāhmaṇa called Bandhujīva appears and jokingly says that if one of them obtains the feminine form their worries would come to an end and then they can marry each other. Hearing these words the worried fathers again shudder with fear but seeing no way out they send their sons to Vidarbha. On their way to that (Vidarbha) they come across Kali, a demon personifying the modern bad time. He notices them and quietly slips away with mischievous intention of troubling these innocent boys. He goes to the hermitage of sage Durvāsas and with the help of his minister anger waits for them. After some time these young boys also reach the hermitage. They are enchanted by the natural beauty of the place. Sāmavat is carried away by the captivating songs of the nymph Madālasā and her friend Induvadanā who happen to be singing and enjoying at that time. He is so much engrossed in hearing the celestial song that he cannot hear the shouts of sage Durvāsas who enraged at this pronounces the terrible curse: "As Sāmavat is not responding to my call on account of a woman he himself will be transformed into a woman."

Second act— On the festive occasion of Holi the whole city of Vidarbha has gone wild with enjoyment. No one hears what the other says. But everybody has something to say. Only a deaf Brāhmaṇa is an exception. He does not join the people who are making merry. He calls them names. Sāmavat and Sumedhas also are silent spectators. The playful young boys do not spare them and tease them. The king of Vidarbha is also full of joy on that occasion. The royal palace too wears a festive appearance. At one place dances are taking place while at another place poetic bouts are going on. The two boys are very much impressed by the joyous atmosphere.

Third act—Kali describes its power. Formerly Dharma was respected but now no one cares for it. Every one is attracted by woman and wine. These are the happy signs for Kali because these things strengthen his power. At the other end queen Sīmantinī is preparing for the worship of Mother Gaurī. The word spreads that the queen after worshipping Mother Gaurī, will distribute wealth and other things to Brāhmaṇa couples. The two Brāhmaṇa boys Sāmavat and Sumedhas after sight-seeing come to seek an audience with the king. Vasantaka (Vidūṣaka) introduces them to him (the king). While doing so he says that Sāmavat has such a charming figure and

lovely features that it seems as if a lady has put on man's clothes. Sāmavat feels hurt by this remark. He protests and says that it ill behoves a responsible man to pass such an ugly remark. At that time the king is also in a jolly mood and instead of scolding Vasantaka he himself joins him and says that Sāmavat should actually dress like a woman and both the boys should go to receive Dakṣiṇā from the queen disguised as husband and wife. At first both of them are very furious but when the king says that it is not a joke but an order and that they should obey it, only then they, with crest-fallen faces, go to the queen disguised as husband and wife. Sāmavat puts on feminine clothes while Sumedhas leads her as her husband. At that very moment the king is informed that the forest-dwellers have posed a great menace to his kingdom and some positive steps need be taken to bring them under control immediately.

Fourth act—A beggar comes to the city of Vidarbha for alms but is surprised to see its sad plight. He is worried that in the reign of king Dharmasīnadhū the city is suffering from such a calamity. At that time a Brāhmaṇa who is well-versed in Yogic practices comes, quenches the thirst of the beggar and gives him something to eat. The Brahmacārin with his Yogic powers comes to know as to what has happened to Sāmavat and Sumedhas. He tells the beggar that it is but natural that such calamities should befall the kingdom when even the sons of the sages are subjected to such cruel jokes. The fact with regard to Sāmavat is that he has really become a woman due to the power of the devotion of Sīmantinī, though originally the disguise of Sāmavat and Sumedhas as husband and wife had been intended merely as a joke. The beggar is highly surprised to know this. Now here the story takes a sharp turn. Sāmavat who has now turned a woman seduces Sumedhas who takes her to be his old boy friend Sāmavat. Sāmavat who is now called Sāmavatī on account of her change of sex takes him (Sumedhas) to a secluded place where she strips off to show him that she is now a woman. Sumedhas is both surprised and shocked to note that Sāmavat, the son of a sage and himself a learned man, is begging for love like an ordinary woman. Sumedhas is no doubt attracted by the charming beauty of Sāmavatī but he controls himself and does not succumb to any such thing as may make him repent afterwards. Very mildly he repudiates the advances of his new girl friend. Both of them then reach the hermitage where Sārasvata and Vedamitra are waiting for them. Sārasvata is furious to see his son turned into a woman and takes the pledge that he would reduce the king of

Vidarbha to ashes by pronouncing a curse on him. The fourth act closes with this angry mood of the sage.

Fifth act — A minister of king Dharmasindhu who was away to another country to quell a rebellion there is now on his way back to his country. He endures many hardships on the way. The boat on which he is travelling sinks due to a terrible cyclone. It is just a matter of chance that he survives and reaches the shore in almost half dead condition. The same Yogī who had earlier satisfied the hunger and the thirst of the beggar spots him and brings him back to consciousness. He tells the minister that Sārasvata, a sage, has become highly angry because his son Sāmavat has now become a woman. He further tells him that if he likes to save the king and his kingdom from destruction he should hand over a flower, given by him (the Yogī) to the king which he (the king) should put in his turban when he talks to the enraged sage. This would pacify him (the sage). The Yogī gives the minister the power of travelling through the air and disappears.

The king receives the distressing news of the fury of the sage and the destruction of his army simultaneously. He is in a highly penitent mood. Under the advice of his priest he worships the Mother Goddess for the pacification of the sage. In the meantime there reaches the minister carrying the flower given to him by the Yogī. He tells the king all that happened to him. The king puts the flower in his turban. At that very moment there comes the sage Sārasvata with his eyes red with anger. He threatens the entire kingdom with destruction for the wrong that had been done to him by the king but the king is able to pacify him as he had worshipped the Mother Goddess and had put the flower in his turban. The Mother Goddess herself appears before him and blesses him and says that he should have no fear. Turning to the sage she says that Sāmavat has now turned a woman and she cannot become a man. "Now, I give you the boon that you would be blessed with another son who would be possessed of all the fine human qualities." She advises Sārasvata to marry Sāmavatī to Sumedhas for both are in love with each other. The sage is pacified and the king too is highly pleased at the appearance of the Goddess. The sage then utters the blessing that there would always reign prosperity in his (Dharmasindhu's) kingdom. Saying this he departs.

Sixth act—Sāmavatī and Sumedhas are deeply in love with each other. Both are suffering from the pangs of love. Sumedhas tells Bandhujīva, his friend, that his repudiation of the advances of Sāmavatī still causes him intense

pain. Bandhujīva however consoles him by saying that both of them would be married shortly and therefore he should have no worry and anxiety on that score. On the other hand Sāmavatī gives expression to her love-lorn condition in most poignant words to her friend Madhuravacanā. A sārīkā sitting near the two girl friends hears these words and repeats them to Sumedhas while it perches on a branch of a tree near him. Sumedhas pines further to hear these words. While the lover and the beloved are thus pining for each other there go on preparations for their marriage. The preparations being complete, the marriage is solemnized according to proper rites. Bandhujīva is the recipient of the big amount of the fee (dakṣiṇā). He is naturally happy at that. The friendship of Vedamitra and Sārasvata is further strengthened and they bid farewell to each other after blessing their son, daughter and the king of Vidarbha. With this happy denouement the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Sumedhas—Sumedhas, the son of sage Vedamitra, is the hero of this play. He is possessed of fortitude, is serious by nature and is well-versed in the Śāstras. He never loses his temper. One great quality about his character is that he never does anything wrong under the hypnotic power of passion. He is sober by his very nature. That is why while calling him and his friend Sāmavat his father and Sāmavat's father say:

आगच्छतामत्र सुतौ सुशीलौ ।¹

"Come here our good sons."

At his father's bidding he proceeds to the Vidarbha country but is too shy to seek an audience with the king. Moreover he knows the nature of kings, especially when there is a festival going on in the kingdom. Says he :

आधिपत्यमदैर्मत्तो राजैव भयकारणम् ।

तत्रापि मदकालोऽयं कस्य नैव भयप्रदः ॥²

"A king mad with power in himself is the source of fear (for a common man). On top of that this is the time of madness. To whom would it not cause fear?"

To tell the truth, each and every aspect of his (*Sumedhas*) character is flawless but the most bright aspect comes into light when Sāmavatī provokes him for sexual enjoyment which he firmly declines. What does

1. First act, P. 28.

2. First act, p. 58.

this mean? Does Sumedhas have no attraction for Sāmavati's charm? No, he has. Still he controls himself and this is the moment when he touches the height of nobility and gives a true example of being the son of a sage. He is not the son of a common man, who when faced with such circumstances may lose all control over his senses and indulge in bodily enjoyment. He is the son of a sage and he should prove it by his own deeds. A lonely charming place, the festival of Holi and above all a beautiful lady herself proposing for sexual union all these are enough to make a man fully lose his control but look at the fortitude of Sumedhas. He never crosses the limits of nobility even when Sāmavati falls unconscious due to sexual urge. Sāmavati requests him that if his conscience does not allow him to indulge in such an act without first taking her as his legal wife he may at that time marry her by Gandharva rites, but Sumedhas still firm considers it improper. He deems it proper only after regular marriage. Below we reproduce a dialogue between Sāmavati and Sumedhas which brings out very clearly what we have stated above:

सामवती — (स्वगतम्) कथं किञ्चित् कलितवेषधुः सरोमोद्गमः स्तब्ध इव प्रेयान् । (विलोक्य) अथवा युक्तम्, मदन ! भिन्धि भिन्धि. एतस्य यमनियमककंशं हृदयम् । (क्षणान्तरं प्रकटम्) कान्त ! अप्यवलोकितानि मम केशपाशादीनि, अवगतं मे असंशयितस्त्रीत्वं, समासादितश्च निश्चयः ?¹

Sāmavati—(to herself) My lover is trembling slightly. The hair of the whole body are standing on end. It seems as if he has lost his senses. (looking forward) It is good. O God of love, pierce his heart which has become too hard by discipline. (after a moment, openly) Darling have you seen my thick hair etc.? Have you come to know that I am doubtlessly a woman? Have you come to (any) conclusion?

सुमेधाः—(अशृण्वन् इव स्वमवलोक्य स्वगतम्) आः ! कुतः स्विन्नानि मेऽङ्गानि ? कुतश्चायं रोमाञ्चः कम्पश्च ? अथवा बुद्धम् ।

ग्रीष्मे खेदः प्रभवति शीते रोमोद्गमः सकम्पश्च ।

सर्वं सहैव घटयति कठिनः किलकिञ्चित्तो हावः ॥

तन्नूनं मदनस्यैष उपद्रवः । (विभाव्य) हृदय ! धैर्यं धेहि, धैर्यं धेहि, त्वं राजसानां रजपुत्राणां नासि, अपितु सात्त्विकानां मुनिपुत्राणामसि । धैर्यं धेहि ।²

"Sumedhas—(posing as if not listening, speaking to himself) Ah, how is it that all my limbs are wet with perspiration? What is this horripilation

1. Fourth act, p. 142.

2. Fourth act, p. 143.

and trembling ? or I understand.

There is tiredness in summer, trembling and horripilation in winter but the strong amorous agitation brings about all these at one and the same time. Definitely this is Cupid's mischief. (*Reflecting*) My heart, have patience, have patience, you are not the heart of passionate princes; you are the heart of a pure sage's son. So you should have patience."

But this suppression of emotions and hard self-control is upto that time only when Sumedhas thinks Sānavatī as some other woman. As soon as their elders decide about their marriage Sumedhas begins to feel the pangs of separation. He can clearly visualize the beautiful image of his love-lorn beloved. Look what a vivid memory he has of her :

(स्वगतम्) अहह ! वचनेनानेन करतलन्यस्तकपोलतलायाः तापशुष्यदशनवसनायाः
सख्याः प्रार्थनमशृण्वन्त्यास्तस्या मूर्तिलिखितेव मम हृदयालेख्ये । अहह !! सामवति
मदर्थमियं वेदना ते । आः कथमद्यापि न भिद्यते मम वज्रहृदयम् । (इति व्याकुली-
भवति)¹

"(To himself) Ah ! By these words the image of my beloved is carved as it were on the canvas of my heart, the beloved, who is putting one hand under her cheek, whose mouth and clothes are dry due to heat, who is not listening to the request of her friend. Ah ! Sānavatī, this torture you are suffering on account of me. How is it that my stone-like heart is not pierced even now ? (*saying this he feels uneasy*)

Thus we find in Sumedhas an ideal Brahmachārin, an ideal son, an ideal friend and above all an ideal lover. He behaves with perfect politeness and cordial affection. Never does an insulting and harsh remark escape his lips.

Sānavat (*Sānavatī*) — There are two aspects of Sānavat's character before us. The first is when as a boy he is very intimate with Sumedhas and the second, when transformed into a woman, he is making advances to his companion for sexual indulgence. He is normal on both occasions. To Sumedhas however he appears abnormal for he has a vivid and clear memory of what he (*Sānavat*) was and how he behaved when he was his boy-friend. Sānavat after becoming a woman has forgotten all about her early life. It seems as if she was never a boy in her life because not only her body her mind too has become transformed into that of a woman. She begins to think herself a real woman while Sumedhas even though knowing

1. Sixth act, p. 207.

fully well that he has a woman before him cannot reconcile himself to the change that has come about in his boy-friend of the early childhood. Even as a boy Sāmavat possesses more feminine qualities than masculine. He has beautiful figure, attractive features and soft voice. Even Vasantaka (Vidūṣaka of king Dharmasindhu) marks his effeminate appearance:

वयस्य ! महाराज ! सुन्दरत्वं तु सुमेघसोऽप्यनिर्वचनीयम्, तत्रापि सामवांस्तु पुं वद्भावं गता सुन्दरीव शोभते ।¹

'My friend, your Highness! though Sumedhas' beauty is beyond description yet Sāmavat looks as if he is a beautiful woman transformed into a man.'

The moment he becomes a woman he forgets as said above, everything about his previous life and begins behaving like an ordinary woman. She herself proposes though the natural course would have been for Sumedhas to do so. In self-control Sāmavati falls far short of Sumedhas. She seduces Sumedhas. It is only Sumedhas' utmost self-control that helps retrieve the situation. Sāmavati is unable to control herself. That is why she says:

सत्यमस्म्यहं बाला तत् कथं धैर्यं दध्याम् । क्वाहं यौवनमदपरवती, क्वेयं धैर्यं घस्म-
रस्य शरसन्धानचातुरी, क्वायं वसन्तस्य सर्वसुखमयः समयः, क्वैतन्मञ्जुगुञ्जदलि-
पुञ्जावृतं वनम्, क्व च करेणी कोरकविशेष इव एष भावत्क उपदेशः ?²

"No doubt I am a young woman. How can I have patience? Where am I, mad with youth, and where is the skill in fixing the arrows on the part of Cupid who is the destroyer of patience, where is this time of the spring with all kinds of happiness, where is this forest full of swarms of bees humming pleasantly and where is this advice of yours which is like a type of bud for a she-elephant?"

There are other characters too such as sages Sārasvata and Vedamitra, king Dharmasindhu and Vidūṣaka Vasantaka and so on. All of these play their part very well in the drama.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Shri Vyasa has a command over the expression. He can wield it effectively. By the mere repetition of a word he can create an effect which is long and abiding:

आचारलक्ष्मीमपि राज्यलक्ष्मीं माधुर्यलक्ष्मीमपि धैर्यलक्ष्मीम् ।

चातुर्यलक्ष्मीमपि शौर्यलक्ष्मीं बिभ्रत् स लक्ष्मीश्वर इत्यभाणि ॥³

1. Third act, p. 106.

2. Fourth act, p. 145.

3. First act, p. 22.

The author embellishes his work with a number of figures of speech some of which are of course highly fascinating and charming.

He compares the sidelong glances with the lotuses surrounded all over by the swarms of hovering bees :

लुलद्रोलम्बालीकलितकमलस्पद्धिरुचयः¹

Tha Muse of the poet sometimes weaves strange webs. He is then most original.

The moon is said to be consumptive. The poet's explanation for this is that he is suffering from the agony of his having been made a pauper by the smile of Induvadānā :

एतया स्मितमात्रेण चन्द्रो निष्किञ्चनीकृतः ।

तदीयतापसन्तप्तः क्षयीति परिगीयते ॥²

With regard to Cupid's immolation in the fire of Śiva's eye the poet's surmise is that he (Cupid) resorted to such an extreme step because he could not probably stand the sight of his miserable father (mind; Cupid is Manojā, the son of mind) being dragged by the lady (Madālasā):

आकृष्यमाणं पितरं विलोक्य मनस्त्वया दीनतरं मनोभूः ।

शिवाक्षिवह्निं बहु सञ्ज्वलय्य ददाह देहं किल लज्जयेव ॥³

With regard to the moon in the dark night (Kuhū) the conjecture of the poet is that it is actually the sun ; only it has assumed the different form of the moon to avoid its eclipse by Rāhu :

मामादित्यं मत्वा तद्ग्रहणं वै कुहूदिने स्पष्टम् ।

ग्रसेत न यथा राहुः सूर्यसरूपो बभूव चन्द्र इति ॥⁴

The moon in the morning is pale with its light gone. Why should it have been so ? The imagination of the poet gives us the reason for it. Well, it is so because the moon indulged in sexual union with eastern quarter in the night. The sun of course could not stand this adultery. He paid the moon back in laying his hand on the waterlily. The lotuses laughed at this insult of the moon who would not stand it. With its limbs becoming white with mental agony it drank poison. It fell down on the hills, with the scandal attaching to it in the form of the dark spot :

1. First act, p. 29.

2. First act, p. 42.

3. First act, p. 43.

4. Second act, p. 67.

रात्रौ चन्द्रेण भुक्ताममरपतिदिशं वीक्ष्य भानुः स्वकीयां
 क्रोधाद्गुण्ययुक्तस्तरणिरपि करं कैरविण्यां चकार ।
 दृष्ट्वा तं चैव चन्द्रः कमलविहसितः खेदपाण्डूकृताङ्गो
 मन्ये पीत्वा विषं वै गिरिषु निपतितो लाञ्छनस्यच्छलेन ॥¹

The verses are very often characterized by raciness which gains in intensity and momentum by the occurrence one after the other of the similar-sounding verbs. A few examples will make the point clear :

- (क) सङ्कोचयति तरलयति विस्तारयति प्रफुल्लयति ।
 निजपक्षौ कूजन्तो पञ्जरगा यत्र कृत्रिमा चटका ॥²
 (ख) स्वेदयति खेदयत्यपि, तापयति तथा विवरुणयति ।
 स्मरणस्यापि च हरणं स्मरज्वरोऽयं करोतितराम् ॥³

The same function is performed more or less by *yamaka* a few most delightful examples of which are reproduced below :

- (क) विलसति विमला कमला कमलावलिकलितललिततटा ।⁴
 (ख) कलाकलापं कलयन् किलायमहो ! महोभिर्महितो महेशः ॥⁵
 (ग) गाणेशं पदकमलं कमलंकर्तुं समर्थं न ?⁶
 (घ) नवकुलैर्बकुलैः परितो वृता
 न विटपा विटपा इह सन्त्यमी ।
 नवनगा वनगा विलसन्त्यहो
 नरमणी रमणीय इह प्रभुः ॥⁷
 (ङ) मा तापय मा मारुत ! मा रुतमाकलय कलकण्ठ !
 किं रे कूजथ मधुपाः ! मधुपानं कुस्त तूष्णीकाः ॥⁸

Apart from *yamaka* the author employs general alliteration too. Not only in songs which are excessively characterized by it as also by rhyme we meet with it elsewhere too. The author eminently succeeds in producing a jingle with an effortless ease. Below we reproduce a few choice examples of it :

1. Third act, p. 88.
2. Third act, p. 99.
3. Fourth act, p. 153.
4. First act, p. 13.
5. First act, p. 21.
6. First act, p. 26.
7. First act, p. 35.
8. Fourth act, p. 151.

- (क) विपक्षपक्षक्षयसक्षणोऽत्र विचक्षणः पक्षधरो बभूव ।¹
 (ख) कनकविटपभङ्गा लम्बिलोलद्विहङ्गा
 रुचिरचितसदङ्गा भान्ति वृक्षाः कपाटे ।।²
 (ग) कोकिलकलकाकलीकलकला माकन्दवृन्दमञ्जुमञ्जरीमरन्दमुदित-
 मानसमधुकरमधुरभङ्गारादच मम कर्णयोः तोदा इव संजाताः ।³
 (घ) या च सा नतमालतमालमिलितमल्लीवल्लीपटली, तत्समीप एव मिलदगन्ध-व्रात-
 वात-व्याधूत-चूतमञ्जरी-समास्वाद-संसक्त-कोकिल-कल-कूजित-पूजितो लसद्भ्रमर-
 गुञ्जः कुञ्जोऽस्ति ।⁴

It is noteworthy that the longer the compound the greater the inclination of the writer to go in for alliteration. The words then begin to give the appearance of tinkling bells.

It is natural for the writer of the Śivarājaviṇaya which has won wide acclaim and approbation and has come to be classed with the old classics of Sanskrit prose to go in for long passages with double entendre and the like which though suitable for a prose romance must impede action in a play. Left to themselves they are excellent pieces of art, the precious stones but they have not been laid in the proper surface. In writing them the poet in the writer seems to have got the upper hand. For proper appreciation we reproduce a few of them below :

- (क) परमेकं चित्रमिवावभाति यदेषा विरहिजनमनोभेदननिर्दये हृदये कुचकुम्भगलितस्व-
 धुनीवारिधाराप्रचारमिव मुक्ताविहारं तारच्छविहारं धारयन्ती, चरणेन च तारकाप-
 टलपरिस्पृष्टिमणिगणरञ्जितं वदनकृतबहुलधक्कारजातलज्जया पादयोः पतितमिन्दु-
 मिव मञ्जुलमञ्जरीं शोभयन्ती, शिरसा च वेणीफणिमणिमिव चूडामणिं विरोच-
 यन्ती, कूर्पराभ्यां च शृङ्खलाबद्धयुवजनमनःसमूहमिव मौक्तिकभूषणं भूषयन्ती
 अपि कथमियं नासायां मणिमुक्तादीनपहाय गुञ्जां धारयति ।।⁵
 (ख) अपरं च इवस्तु एष चन्द्रवासरोऽस्ति, तत् मरकतकृतकर्णपूरविडम्बकत्र्यम्बकनिर्मा-
 ल्यविल्वपत्रशोभितकर्णकपोला चन्द्रशेखरध्यानस्थिरीकृतनिष्कम्पपक्षमपङ्क्तिसंयमि-
 तलोचनयुगलविजिताद्धौन्निद्रनीलकमला पार्वतीपादपङ्कजपरागायमाणकुङ्कुमाङ्कि-
 तमेकचक्रकुञ्चितकचप्रचयविरचितसायन्तनधनाम्बरविभ्रमा कोमलस्थलकमलदलकान्ति-

1. First act, p. 16.
2. Second act, p. 62.
3. Fourth act, p. 151.
4. Fourth act, pp. 155-6.
5. First act, p. 43.

भ्रान्तिसम्पादकपादविन्यासविरचितविविधप्रदक्षिणा दत्तादीर्घदक्षिणा दक्षिणाना-
थोपहासदक्षिणा वामाऽपि दक्षिणा, दक्षिणाऽपि कलितालका, कलितालकाऽपि च
नयक्षमोदितयशाः, श्रीमती तत्रभवती सीमन्तिनी ।¹

(ग) उपचितबहुव्रीहिराख्यातवृत्तान्तः सुसन्धिः साधको व्याकरणवद्वर्ण्योऽपि न सन्धारिता-
व्ययीभावः, सुपक्षस्थो विपक्षाक्रमणशीलः, प्रथमासद्धेतुच्छायाऽपि न सव्यभिचारः,
कश्च न दिदृक्षते शुभवन्तं भवन्तम् ? यः प्रायशो यशोलाभवान् भवान् पराशर इव
पराशयज्ञः, शुक इवाऽऽशुकलितपरमार्थः जाबालिरिव जीवालिदयालुः, गोतम इव
महाभागोत्तमः, शतानन्द इव शतानन्दः, गर्ग इव गर्गभक्तः, शाकल्य इव च
हुतशाकल्यः ।²

(घ) अग्नि मातर्जंगदम्बिके ! कमलनयनस्य कमलनाभस्य महिममहत्त्वदायिनी कमलानाम्नी
त्वमेवासि । जगद्गुरोः सागरोद्गीर्णगिरिष्ठगरलगिरणस्य रिङ्गद्गङ्गातरङ्गभङ्गर-
ङ्गसङ्गलसदुत्तमाङ्गस्य गिरिशस्य गौरवविधात्री गौरी च त्वमेव । त्वमेव च महिष-
महिषीभूषणमोषणविधायिनी । त्वमेव चातिप्रचण्डकोदण्डमण्डितभुजदण्ड-चण्ड-मुण्ड-
खण्डन-कारिणी दुर्दण्ड-दैत्याखण्डलमुण्ड-कुण्डल-मण्डल-मण्डित-गण्ड-युगा चामुण्डा ।³

The work has quite a good sprinkling of those lines too which propound
some fundamental truth and can serve as good epigrams. A few of them
are given below:

- (क) आधिपत्यमदैर्मत्तो राजैव भयकारणम् ।
तत्रापि मदकालोऽयं कस्य नैव भयप्रदः ॥⁴
- (ख) बाचालैः सह वाग्जालैः खेदः पल्लवितो भवेत् ।
तूष्णीम्भावे गृहीते तु दुर्वचाः किं करिष्यति ॥⁵
- (ग) देवतासु गुरो पित्रोस्तथा राजकुलेषु च ।
कतवं कलयन् मर्त्यः सद्यो नश्यति सान्वयः ॥⁶
- (घ) 'स्वयं विनष्टः परनाशने पटुः' इति प्रसिद्ध आभाणकः ।⁷
- (ङ) भस्मतां गतोऽपि नो जहाति रज्जुपाशको
ग्रन्थिवन्धवक्रतां प्रसिद्धमस्ति भूतले ॥⁸

1. Third act, p. 91-2.

2. Third act, p. 110-111.

3. Fifth act, p. 189.

4. Second act, p. 58.

5. Third act, p. 117.

6. Third act, p. 118.

7. Fourth act, p. 147.

8. Fourth act, p. 146.

(च) एष दग्धे इव लवणप्रक्षेपः ।¹

(छ) तत्किं कङ्कणस्यापि दर्पणे साक्षात्कारः ।²

Sometimes the author weaves old well known lines into his composition:

सर्वतः पतितैः स्वीयैः प्रतिबिम्बैर्भवत्युत ।

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।³

Here the second hemistich is from the Puruṣasūkta of the R̥gveda.

Similarly in

यौवनं वनसम्पत्तिः प्रभुत्वमविवेकिता ।

आसवः खलसंसर्गः सर्वं कष्टमुपस्थितम् ॥⁴

the first hemistich is a quotation from an earlier verse. Sometimes instead of actually adopting the older lines he paraphrases the ideas contained in an earlier verse as for example,

यादृशी भावना यस्य सोऽर्थं गृह्णाति तादृशम् ।

शेषं निरीशं च मतं द्विधाऽभूत् कापिलाद्यतः ।⁵

The first hemistich here is a mere paraphrase of the well known older line : यादृशी भावना यस्य सिद्धिर्भवति तादृशी ।

Again the following hemistich

श्रुतं मया वह्निस्माऽस्ति नारी

तथाऽऽज्यतुल्यः पुरुषो मतोऽस्ति ।⁶

is merely a paraphrase of the well known older line

वह्निर्कुम्भसमा नारी घृतकुम्भसमः पुमान् ।

The author not unoften shows his skill in word play too. As for example he gives us such a verse by joining second syllables of whose quadrants the name of the city of Darbhanga is arrived at. The verse in question is :

यो दक्षतां संसदि सत्कवीनां नरप्रभुर्मान्यतमो विभर्ति ।

शुभप्रदः सेवनतत्पराणां गङ्गातरङ्गाच्छयशःप्रचारः ॥⁷

In another verse he skilfully weaves the names of the metres such as

1. Fourth act, p. 164.

2. Fourth act, p. 138.

3. Third act, p. 99.

4. Third act, p. 114.

5. Fourth act, p. 159.

6. Fourth act, p. 136.

7. First act, p. 22.

Śaśivadanā, Sragdharā and Śrīḥ :

हंसीशोभां कलयति गती शशिवदनेयम् ।

लोलन्मुक्ताप्रवालामलमणिरचितस्रग्धरा भाति यस्याः श्रीः ।¹

The author has good knowledge of grammar and not infrequently draws upon it for his similes, double entendres or even other figures of speech as for example :

- (क) न्यायाद्रिकन्दरहरिहि जयं दधाति
शाब्दश्च घोषयतु किं बहु 'वृद्धिरादैच्' ।²
- (ख) घातुसूत्रसमायुक्ता साधुशब्दस्य साधिका ।
नव वाद्यत इयं वीणा पुस्तिका व्याकृतेरिव ॥³
- (ग) यशो न सान्तं न नृपोऽप्यदन्तः
ख्यातोऽप्युदन्तोऽस्ति न चापवादः ।
भूमिः सवृद्धिः सगुणोऽथ राजा-
स्त्यत्राखिलं व्याकरणैर्विरुद्धम् ॥⁴
- (घ) स्त्रिय एव तु पुम्भावः शब्दशास्त्रे विलोक्यते ।
स्त्रीभावश्च पुनः पुंसो न क्वाप्यश्चावि भूतले ॥⁵
- (ङ) चित्रं पुरुषोऽप्ययमिह, कलयति सर्वं स्त्रिया हि वैचित्र्यम् ।
पश्याऽऽदेशेन कृतं यद्वद् रूपान्तरं तु दृशिघातुः ॥⁶

Now a word is due about the songs in the play. The author seems to possess a very good knowledge of the science of music and a special liking for it as an evidence of which we quote the following verse below :

प्राणानप्यपहाय मञ्जुलवनाद् धावन्ति नूनं मृगा
त्यक्त्वा कुण्डलमुन्नतीकृतफणाः स्वस्वालयाद् भोगिनः ।
आनन्दं परमाप्नुवन्ति च यतो मर्त्या अमर्त्या अपि
सोयं मोहनमन्त्र एष विधिना सङ्गीतसंज्ञः कृतः ॥⁷

"This enchanting spell called music has been created by the creator. It is from it that the mortals and immortals derive supreme joy. It is on account of it that the deer come running from a charming forest even at the

1. Second act, p. 77.
2. First act, p. 28.
3. First act, p. 40.
4. Second act, p. 60.
5. Fourth act, p. 131.
6. Fourth act, p. 141.
7. First act, p. 39.

risk of their life while cobras come out of their respective places giving up their coils and raising their hoods."

It is this music, the *mohanamantra*, which the author uses not unoften in his play to charm his audiences. And in this he succeeds eminently. Some of the songs in the play leave a very happy impression on the mind. The author does it well to preface them with the indication of the *rāga* in which they are to be sung. They show the author's mastery in music.

The principal *rāgas* employed are *Vasanta*, *Dhānāśrī*, *Mallāra* and *Bhairavī*; the first two being used at least twice. The *Dhrupada*, the intricate form of song, too is given by the playwright. Not only in vocal, in instrumental music too the author shows his skill. As an example we may mention the description of the playing on the lute by *Madālasā* :

तूर्णं यस्मिन् स्फुरणमुचितं वर्षणं कम्पनं च
स्वीकर्तव्या किल तरलता मन्दता वै कदाचित् ।
उत्प्लुत्याऽऽशु प्रयतनमथो सर्पणं वै तथेत्थं
वीणावादः क्व कठिनतरः कोमला चाङ्गुलिः क्व ? ॥¹

The description of the playing on the *mṛdaṅga* too is quite picturesque:

धि धि धि तटधि तधि तटकधि ताधीनधि ताकधिन्
तुक्का तुन्न तटाक भत्ततटतां ताधूमधुं ताकधुम् ।
द्रां द्रां द्रां ध्रकतां तधत्तटकधुं धट्टककधामुच्चरन्
भो भो भावकलावति प्रियतमे शस्यो मृदङ्गस्तव ॥²

It is not an uncommon sight to see the Sanskrit poets playing upon the onomatopoeic words and putting their imagination at work in finding from them certain meaning which would suit their fancy. The sounds would then be taken to be actual words and the imaginary meanings fitting into the context would be understood from them. At least once the author resorts to this device :

आरब्धे नृत्यकृत्ये हरिगुणरहिते लम्पटानां समाजे
धिक् तान् धिक् तान् मृदङ्गः कथयति सुतरां सम्मुखं श्रावयित्वा ।
कान् कान् कान् कांश्च तालः प्रतिरणतितरामङ्गहारैश्च बाला
सभ्रूभङ्गैरपाङ्गैः प्रवदति सकलं नूनमेतान् समेतान् ॥³

The poet in the writer shines out in descriptions where he allows full

1. First act, p. 46.
2. Second act, p. 73.
3. Second act, p. 75.

play to his poetic faculty. As in instance we may mention his description of Holi revelry :

सिन्दूरस्य घनाघनैरिव घनैर्व्याप्ताः समस्ता दिशः
काश्मीरोदकसेचनैररुणिता मार्गा गृहा भित्तिकाः ।
किञ्जल्कैरिव भान्ति लिप्तवपुषः सार्द्राम्बरा नागराः
भेरीभर्भरडिण्डिमाहतिपरा गायन्ति गीतीरिमे ॥¹

"All the quarters are covered with the clouds of red lead; the paths, houses and walls are reddened with the sprinkling of water mixed with saffron, the people of the city with their wet clothes give the appearance of having been besmeared by the filaments of flowers as it were. They sing songs to the accompaniment of the striking of the (different kinds of tabors such as) *bheris, jharjharas and dindimas*."

A drama having complete songs and alliteration but lacking in good humour cannot be called complete. The writer is aware of this fact. This is why he introduces such scenes or makes his characters utter such words as excite good laughter. The writer first of all explains as to what he means by good humour:

हास्यं तदेव रचयेत् परास्यं यत् प्रमोदयेत् ।
स हास्यकारो निर्वास्यो यस्मादेकोऽपि खिद्यते ॥²

"One should create only that humour which gives joy to others. That writer of humour who causes revulsion even to one single individual deserves expulsion." Keeping this ideal in view he creates such humour as pleases everybody and hurts nobody. The dialogue between a deaf Brāhmaṇa and a courtier, the instruction to an old man to enjoy young girls on the occasion of Holi—all these are examples of good humour.

The deaf Brāhmaṇa is unable to hear clearly : That is why he loses his temper for nothing and thus provokes laughter

राजभट्टः— अरे ब्राह्मण ! तिष्ठ तिष्ठ ।
जटिलः—रर रे ! त्वमपि किं प्रलपसि दुष्ट दुष्टेति । रे ममम् मूर्ख ! त्वं दुष्टः, त्वत्पिता
च दुष्टः ।
राजभट्टः— हं हो ! न कथयामि दुष्ट दुष्ट इति, ननु कथयामि तिष्ठ तिष्ठ इति ।
जटिलः— अरे रे ननन्, नासिकाहीनः ददद दुष्ट दुष्टः ननन् नरकगामी, चवच चोर-

1. Second act, p. 57.

2. Second act, p. 54.

दुष्टश्च त्वं त्वत्पिता त्वत्पितामहश्च (दण्डमुद्यम्य) ददद् दूरतो भव ।¹

"A royal soldier - O Brāhmaṇa, stop stop.

The Brāhmaṇa with matted hair -(looking) R. r. You also babble that I am a rogue. O wretched *mūrkhā* (fool), you are rogue, your father is rogue.

A royal soldier - Haṃ ho, I am not saying that you are rogue; I only say 'stop.'

The Brāhmaṇa with matted hair - N. n. n. You are without a nose. D. d. d, you are rogue. N. n. n, you go to hell; c. c. c, you are a thief (*cora*); your father is a thief; your grandfather is a thief. (*Picking up a rod*) d, d, d, go away.

Thus we see that the drama is full of dances, songs, humour and at the same time is unique in its plot and dialogue. Rightly does the author call it as occupying the first place in the count of the plays:

यत् (सामवतम्) इदानीं रूपकगणनासक्तानां कनिष्ठिकामेवाधिरोहति ।²

1. Second act, p. 51.

2. First act, pp. 12-13.

Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ

INTRODUCTORY

The one act play Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ is written by Dr. V. Raghavan. It is published in Samskrita Ranga Annual, Madras, 1959. The author has for its theme the story of the Samudramanthana, as given in the Bhāgavata-purāṇa. The play was broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio in August, 1959 on the occasion of the Varalakṣmīvrata.

PLOT

Nāndī over, a reciter called the Paurāṇika informs the audience that after Indra was defeated by demons as a result of the curse which Durvāsas had pronounced on him the whole world became devoid of light. Everything disappeared from the view. Then all the deities headed by Indra and Brahmā went to Viṣṇu and requested him to help them. Viṣṇu advised them to churn the ocean and obtain the nectar by which they would become immortal. The deities did that with the help of demons. The fierce poison which was the first item to emerge from the ocean was swallowed up by Śiva.

Both Devendra, lord of deities and Daityendra, lord of demons, are happy that Śiva has swallowed up poison. Then emerges the moon which the deities present as a gift to lord Śiva. Then come out Kāmadhenu, the Airāvata elephant, the Pārijāta tree and the Kaustubha jewel, respectively. Kaustubha is presented to Viṣṇu. Then appear Lakṣmī and Vāruṇīdevī (the wine). The deities want to obtain Lakṣmī but when the demons also insist to have her (Lakṣmī) the deities present them with Vāruṇīdevī who is equally attractive. Daityendra is attracted by Vāruṇī while gods arrange a Svayaṃvara for Lakṣmī. Lakṣmī chooses Viṣṇu as her husband.

After this, Dhanvantari appears with a jar of nectar in his hands. Viṣṇu tells the deities that now they should be active and try to obtain the nectar while the demons are busy with Vāruṇī (wine) but the demons arrive right at the moment and snatch away the jar. On the other hand Lakṣmī is proud thinking that she is the most fortunate woman in the universe. Viṣṇu has to teach a lesson to both the demons and Lakṣmī. He acquires the womanly form of Mohinī and completely attracts Daityendra.

He (*Daityendra*) prepares to do everything for her. Mohinī asks for the jar of nectar which he gives away easily. Mohinī is happy to get the jar and gives it to the deities. Lakṣmī is also put in her own place when she notices the most beautiful form of Mohinī. The play ends with the Bharatavākya uttered by Devendra.

CHARACTERIZATION

Deities and demons are the two main groups which have different characteristics. Deities are by nature simple and peace-loving while demons are quarrelsome and passionate. They are more attracted towards beautiful women than anything else. They are engaged in romantic conversation with Vāruṇī while deities are active in procuring Amṛta (*nectar*). Viṣṇu, knows their weakness for women. That is why he assumes the form of Mohinī (a beautiful woman) and asks for the jar of nectar which the lord of the demons had snatched from the deities. The lord of demons is so much impressed by the enchanting beauty of Mohinī that he easily agrees to part with it (the jar of nectar) and hand it over to Mohinī. The deities are thus able to obtain the nectar and become immortal after drinking it.

Rasalīlā

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Dr. V. Raghavan this opera, the Rāsalīlā, is connected with the life of Śrīkṛṣṇa. It is published in the Samskrita Ranga Annual in 1963. Earlier it had been broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio in 1943. It is divided into four scenes called Prekṣaṇakas.

PLOT

First Prekṣaṇaka — The Grānthika appears on the stage and sings a song. He recites a *sloka* from the Bhāgavata Purāṇa which describes the Rāsalīlā of Kṛṣṇa in one of the winter nights with his Yogamāyā. From the other side of the stage Kṛṣṇa appears playing on his flute. All the Gopīs attracted by its melodious tune come around him. They tell each other as to how much they are attracted by the lilting melody of the flute. They say that they cannot resist it and come running to hear it. Grānthika tells that the Gopīs leave everything else when they hear the sound of the flute. One is serving her husband, another is feeding her child, still another is busy preparing meals, but when all of them hear the notes of the flute, they forget everything and come running to Kṛṣṇa who however asks them to go back saying that the night is terrible and their fathers and husbands would be waiting for them and that they should not stay out of their homes in the night. But Gopīs are fully immersed in the Bhakti of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They hear nothing but the sweet notes of the flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Second Prekṣaṇaka — Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs are standing at the bank of the river Yamunā. Gopīs tell Kṛṣṇa that during the time he plays on the flute they will make a garland for him. Kṛṣṇa asks each of them (the Gopīs) to pick up one beautiful flower and give it to Vaijayantī, the Gopī sitting by the side of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. 'Vaijayantī would make a garland with these' says he. It is she who would garland him. Gopīs act as Kṛṣṇa asks them to, and Vaijayantī weaves a garland with them (the flowers). Seeing the beauty of the garland Kṛṣṇa says that it is not the garland of simple flowers; each Gopī has put her heart in it in the form of the flower she has given (यत्सत्यमद्य न पुष्पमालां, किन्तु भवतीनामात्ममालामेव हृदयेन वहामि).¹ Each Gopī feels important

1. Second Prekṣaṇaka, p. 4.

and thinks that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is attracted towards her only. They all sing melodious songs and play Rāsa. Kṛṣṇa is omniscient and knows the working of the mind of the Gopīs. When he realizes that each Gopī is thinking that Kṛṣṇa is considerate to her only and thereby feeling proud he wants to put them in their proper place. With this end in view he disappears.

Third prekṣaṇaka— This leaves the Gopīs very much perplexed and disconcerted. They search for Kṛṣṇa frantically in the whole of the Upavana but are unable to find him. One Gopī tries to imitate Kṛṣṇa and thus wants to console herself. She finds some footsteps which indicate that Kṛṣṇa was accompanied by a Gopī. She along with other Gopīs follows those footsteps. All the Gopīs are jealous of one of their companions whom Kṛṣṇa gave the pleasure of his company. But they are astonished to see that very Gopī standing all alone on one foot in the posture of mounting and in melancholy mood. When the Gopīs ask her about Kṛṣṇa she tells them in highly pathetic tone that as Kṛṣṇa took her with him she felt very proud and began to feel that she was the best woman in the world. When this feeling came into her mind she told Kṛṣṇa that she was very much tired and that he should lift her up and carry her. As soon as she uttered these words Kṛṣṇa disappeared at once and has not returned so far. All the Gopīs feel exceedingly unhappy when they hear the sad plight of that Gopī. They pray for the quick return of Kṛṣṇa.

Fourth Prekṣaṇaka— The Gopīs are filled with anguish when Kṛṣṇa does not appear before them. All their pride and conceit vanishes. They try to have a glimpse of Kṛṣṇa. When however Kṛṣṇa thinks that the Gopīs are purged of pride he reappears among them. The Gopīs feel very happy to see him and praise him. Kṛṣṇa also is in a happy mood. At this the Grānthika appears on the stage and sings the Maṅgala śloka. With this the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Kṛṣṇa— Kṛṣṇa is presented as a romantic hero in the first part of the work. He has magic in his voice. When he plays on his flute all the Gopīs leave their domestic chores and come running to hear its (flute's) melodious tunes. He has such a power that every Gopī thinks herself to be enjoying his favour. But when he finds the Gopīs proud and conceited he immediately leaves them. He is that omnipotent force which has the whole world under his command.

Gopīs— Gopīs are the milk maids who are attracted by the charming personality of Kṛṣṇa. They can leave everything but are unable to resist the melodious call of his flute. Seen from the spiritual point of view they are the souls separated from Paramatattva i. e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa due to their pride or conceit but when that feeling vanishes those pure souls merge again in the Paramatattva.

Kāmaśuddhiḥ

INTRODUCTORY

The one act allegorical play Kāmaśuddhiḥ is written by Dr.V. Raghavan. It is published in Samskrita Ranga Annual, Madras, 1963. It was also broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio.

PLOT

After Nāndī, a poet and his friend discuss with each other the play they are going to present. The poet tells his friend that he has borrowed the plot from the great work, the Kumārasambhavam of Kālidāsa. The play proper begins with the scene where Rati, the wife of Kāma, is shown in an angry mood. After some time Kāma comes there and wants to cheer her up. Rati does not like this. She holds Kāma responsible for the chaos in the world. She says that it is on account of him that passion in Prajāpati was aroused to such an extent as to kindle in him the desire for sexual union with his own daughter. She also holds him responsible for the deviation of even the chaste women from the right path. Kāma fails to pacify her. He requests his friend Madhu (Vasanta) to explain to her the mighty tasks of her husband. But Rati has no soft corner for Madhu and sends him away as she plans to practice penance. On the other hand Nandī is out to find a person who is doing more austere penance than even Lord Śiva. After a hectic search he comes across the place where Rati is practising penance. He is wonder-struck when he sees that Rati has surpassed even Śiva in austerity. Nandī informs Śiva about this. Śiva himself appears on the scene and blesses Rati. He assures her that the present form of Kāma is destined to perish at his own hands. It is only after this that he (Kāma) would be sober. Further, they will be blessed with two offsprings, one son Śama and one daughter Tuṣṭi. The play ends with the Bharatavākya uttered by Śiva.

CHARACTERIZATION

The play, as said earlier, is allegorical. Love, passion, spring, virtue and wealth are the abstract phenomena. All these have been personified here.

Kāma—He is the hero of the play. He has promised Indra to obstruct the penance of Viśvāmitra. By nature he feels utmost happiness in disturbing the penance of great Ṛṣis. Even the sharp words of Rati, his beloved wife, have no effect on him. He considers his work of capital importance and tells his wife :

अयि कथं नाम मामेवमुपालभसे, यत्प्रसादाज्जगन्त्यानन्दमनुभवन्ति ।¹

“O why do you so reproach me by whose favour the worlds enjoy happiness.”

He is responsible for inciting people to indulge in such activities as are unbecoming and have public censure. Rati condemns him by saying :

अनायमन्नह्यण्यमेव मे भर्ता चरति । तपस्विनः पूज्यान् देवान् सतीश्च देवतोपमाः
व्याकुलयति । वन्द्या मे प्रार्थनाः । न जाने कथं वायं शुद्ध्यति । सर्वमेव घातुपिण्डं,
न किञ्चिदत्र हेमेति भाति ।²

“My husband does only what is dishonourable, disgraceful. He agitates even sages, the venerable deities and deity-like chaste ladies. My entreaties are of no avail. I don't know how he is to be purified. To me it appears there is all alloy in him, nothing gold.”

Finally it is due to the austere penance of Rati that his (*Kāma*'s) form is completely changed by Lord Śiva and he is reborn with sober qualities.

Rati—She is the heroine of the play. It is she, who disgusted with the unruly habits of her husband (*Kāma*) performs austere penance and obtains what she wants. She is a brave lady. She does not hesitate to utter harsh words even to her husband when she deems fit. Thus she says :

नैव आनन्दः, तदाभास एव यं जगन्त्यद्य त्वद्वशंवदान्यनुभवन्ति । कथं नाम तत्र
शुभः प्रमोदस्सम्पद्येत, यत्र नाहं रतिर्बद्धभावाऽस्मि । त्वमद्य कोप्युन्मादो व्याधिर्वा
जनानाम् । म्रियन्ते च जनास्त्वया पराक्रान्ताः, यतो मन्ये त्वमपि मार इति प्रथसे
लोकेषु ।³

“This is not happiness, it is only a semblance of it which the worlds in obedience to you experience today. How can there arise welcome pleasure where I, Rati, have no attachment? You are today for the people either a disease or madness. And the people overpowered by you meet their death for you too are known to the people as *māra*, a killer.

1. *Kāmaśuddhih*, p. 3.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

She surpasses in austerity even Lord Śiva so much so that He Himself feels driven to her :

परमेश्वरः — इयं सा, यस्यास्तपो मदीयमपि तपो दूरमघःकृत्य, मामप्यत्राकषत् ।¹

He speaks of her as the transformation of his own joy :

सैषा मदीयस्य आनन्दस्य विवर्तः ।²

A devoted wife she atones for the sins of her spoilt husband :

दुर्ललितस्य भर्तुः पापानां भार्या स्वयं प्रायश्चित्तं कुरुते ।³

She cannot tolerate her husband following unrighteous path. She has to restrain him, she feels and in that firm resolve of her declares :

भर्तुं रप्यवलितस्य कार्याकार्यमजानतः ।

उत्पथं प्रतिपन्नस्य भार्या भवति शासिका ॥⁴

‘Wife controls a conceited husband when he follows wrong path not able to discriminate between what should be done and what should not be done.’

She pledges to follow her husband only when he is transformed from a demon to a deity :

तदाहमनुव्रता भविष्यामि मे भर्तुः यदा स रक्षो देवो भवित्ता ।⁵

Lord Śiva assures her that her husband (Kāma) would be reborn with good qualities only when he will perish in the fire of renunciation issuing from his forehead-eye and will rise shining like a newly risen sun :

परमेश्वरः — तदैष मदीयनिटिलाक्षिनिष्पतितेन वैराग्यमयतेजसा दग्धः.....नवोदितार्कं

इव उद्योतमान उत्थास्यति ।⁶

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ and the Rāsaliḷā are operas, as said earlier, on the famous episode of the Bhāgavata purāṇa. They are garlands of some beautiful flowers gathered from the Bhāgavata decked with a few leaves of the playwright's own prose found in short and sweet dialogues. Dr. Raghavan has done well in supplying the minimum of additional matter required for explaining and introducing the Bhāgavata śloka and sustaining

1. Ibid., p. 6.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. Ibid., p. 4.

6. Ibid., p. 7.

the narrative. He has also added some *ślokas* or other matter of his own. The very benedictory verse of the Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ makes it clear :

पुराणऋषिवाक्पुष्पैः मद्वाक्पत्रैश्च गुम्फिता ।

साहित्यवनमालेयं श्रीरिवैतु हरेरुरः ॥

"May this garland of the forest of literature woven in the flowers of the words of the old sages and the leaves of my words come like Śrī to the chest of Hari,"

To use a metaphor different from the author we may say that the verses from the old sage Vyāsa in the Bhāgavatam are the anchor to which the prose of the author in both the plays, the Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ and the Rāsalilā is tied. It seems to flow in and out of them turning the works to a running commentary on them.

The Lakṣmīsvayaṃvaraḥ contains an innovation in the form of the introduction of a character called the Paurāṇika. It is through him that the verses from the Bhāgavatam are presented. Devendra and Daityendra, the lord of gods and the lord of demons, again are the author's own innovation. In the Bhāgavatam it is the gods or the demons only.

An innovation introduced by the author in the Rāsalilā relates to the rendering of the Bhāgavata verses reproduced by him or the verses composed by him in classical *rāgas* an indication of which is given by him at the top of each verse in brackets e. g. हुशानीरागेण, मोहनरागेण, यमुनाकल्याणीरागेण etc. In a number of instances the names of the *rāgas* are deftly woven in the *ślokas* themselves, as for example in 'योगमायामुपाश्रितः'¹ माया indicates the name of the *rāga* मायामालवगौल; in 'जगौ कलं वामदृशां मनोहरम्'²; मनोहर indicates the मनोहरी राग and so on. The work forcibly reminds us of the Utsava Sampradāya of the Bhāgavata school.

The author also reproduces sometimes in his prose what is found in verse in the Bhāgavatam. Thus the mad actions of the Gopīs looking for Kṛṣṇa found in the Bhāgavatam are described by Dr. Raghavan in his inimitable prose in the Rāsalilā which for proper appreciation is reproduced below :

प्रथमा गोपी—भोः साल ! सालभुजस्त्वया दृष्टो नन्दसूनुः ?

द्वितीया गोपी—अग्रि तमाल ! तमालनीला सुषमा कापि ते पथा गता किम् ?

1. P. 1.

2. Ibid.

तृतीया गोपी—(वंशस्येव ध्वनिः) हन्त ! इतो गायति वंशीमोहनः । एनमुपधावामि । हा धिक् । एष कीचको मारुतापूरितो रीति ।

चतुर्थी गोपी—नन्वितो यमुनाविहारी कालियफणारङ्गे नृत्यन् विराजते, एषाहमुपधावाम्येनम् । हन्त ! कथमियं नः प्रियसख्येव काचित् कालियलीलां नाटयन्ती आत्मानं कृष्णमयतां नयति ।¹

"First cowherdess : O Sāla, have you seen the son of Nanda with his arms like you ?

Second cowherdess : O Tamāla, has some beauty as dark as you has passed your way ?

Third cowherdess : (*Something resembling the sound of a flute*). Here sings the one who charms with his flute. I will run to him.

How sad ! It is the Kīcaka which whistles when filled with the wind.

Fourth cowherdess : O well, Kṛṣṇa is dancing this side on the stage of the hood of Kāliya. Here I run to him.

How sad ! How is it that it is one of our own dear girl friends while acting the story of Kāliya is transforming herself into Kṛṣṇa."

A prominent innovation introduced by the author in the play is the humorous incident of a Gopī who in her pride wants to be carried on the shoulders by Śrī Kṛṣṇa but who is left in the posture of mounting when he suddenly disappears.

The prose recitation in the fourth scene beginning with एवमासां विरहितानाम्² has an excellent rhythm, The wonderful metre of the lilting, dancing *ślokas* in the Bhāgavatam beginning with जयति तेऽधिकं जन्मना ब्रजः³ is successfully imitated in two *ślokas* of the author himself which brings out the spiritual significance of the Rāsa Kṛīḍā or mystic dance when the Jīva or soul is in blissful communion with her divine spouse.

The Kāmaśuddhiḥ is introduced with a dialogue between a poet and his friend instead of the usual Sūtradhāra and the Naṭī. This is the author's own innovation. The angry exchanges between Kāma and Rati, the appearance of Parameśvara etc. are all incidents not found in the Kumārasambhavam on which the story according to the author is based (वस्तु चैतत् कवेः कालिदासस्य कुमारसम्भवान्महाकाव्यादुत्थितम्).

1. Ibid., p. 5.

2. Ibid., p. 7.

3. Ibid., p. 7.

The burning of Kāma by Śiva (referred to as Parameśvara in the play) is the only incident—that again referred to in the end and not actually shown in the play—which has inspired the play-wright to invent the entire story. It is to this extent only that the play is based on or inspired by the famous work, the Kumārasambhavam of Kālidāsa. The introduction in the play of the two characters, Dharmasaṃvardhinī and Arthasakhī is also the author's own innovation and is in line with the newly coined story.

The purpose of the play is to present the purification of connubial love. The old Indian attitude towards this form of love was of two kinds. Some thought that, because it can so easily become sensuous, the only course for a wise man to adopt was to turn away from it once for all. This ascetic ideal indeed is, for instance, the lesson conveyed in the Buddha caritam, an epic poem by Aśvaghōṣa (1st century A. D.). Kāma is figured there as Māra or death and the poet describes how he was completely frustrated in his efforts to lure Buddha away from his spiritual quest. But such extreme asceticism was by no means the prevailing ideal of life in ancient India; it was transforming love rather than eliminating it, the cleansing of the lamp instead of putting out the light. That is the message, for instance of Kālidāsa's epic, the Kumārasambhavam. Here also love suffers frustration, but it is only love as an impulse of the moment. It is soon revived in a thoroughly purified form and the poet shows, in his masterly way, how such sublimated love is the very life and light of the world.

It is love in the latter sense that is the theme of the present work; and, by a happy play on the word *anāṅga* (one of the names of Kāma in Sanskrit) which may also be taken to mean 'not ancillary,' the author represents it as the supreme value of life. The style is reminiscent of Kālidāsa's epic; and the plot aims at artfully explaining the reason for the discomfiture of Kāma as narrated there. Most of the characters that appear here are allegorical like love, passion, virtue and wealth, but the reader hardly feels that they are abstractions. The handling of the subject is so realistic, and the dialogues so lively throughout.

Now a word about the language and the style of the author. All the three plays or playlets are written in easy, fluent style. The prose is not unoften embellished with figures of speech, specially simile, a few choice examples of which may well be reproduced here :

The moon coming out of the churned ocean is compared to the ball of butter :

मन्थनारम्भसमनन्तरमेव क्षीरोदधेः नवनीतपिण्ड इव उदेति (चन्द्रः) ।¹

The Kaustubhamāṇi on the chest of Nārāyaṇa is compared to a newly-risen sun :

नीले ते वक्षसि मेघ इव बालार्कः प्रद्योततामेघ कौस्तुभः ।²

Each and every flower or leaf within garland offered by Gopīs to Kṛṣṇa is compared to their very self :

स्वं स्वमात्मानमिव यूयमुच्चित्य मह्यमपितवत्यः ।³

The anger of Rati is compared to the hotness in the food and the twist in speech :

ऊष्मेव भक्ष्यस्य, वक्रिमेव वचसः, कामपि कान्तिमावतो कोपोऽस्याः शरीरस्य ।⁴

There are a few good aphorisms, too, as for example :

(१) निरोज इव साहित्यं, निर्मन्यु प्रेम केवलपेशलिम्ना पर्यवस्यत्यरुचौ ।⁵

(२) लोहान्तरैः धातुभिश्च दूषितमिति न हेम परित्यक्तव्यं, किन्तु पाकेन शोधयितव्यम् ।⁶

(३) अशुद्ध एव कामः पुमर्थान्तराणामङ्गम् । शुद्धः पुनरनङ्गः, अङ्गी स्वयं परमः पुरुषार्थः ।⁷

Occasionally the author permits himself a modern expression which in the context of the old mythological story looks somewhat amusing :

एष मदनमहिष्या रतेः प्रासादैकदेशः कोपागारः । मन्ये देव्या रत्यात्र सत्याग्रहः क्रियत इति ।⁸

We may close the critique with a few general observations on the language and the style of the works of Dr. Raghavan. His way of writing is in many ways unique. It has a telling simplicity about it. His prose is racy and dialogues crisp. The story is never impeded by unnecessary detail or by show of pedantry. Dr. Raghavan certainly comes out the very best in his plays.

1. Lakṣmīsvayamvaraḥ, p. 10.

2. Ibid., p. 11.

3. Rāsalilā, p. 4.

4. Kāmaśuddhi, p. 2.

5. Ibid., p. 2.

6. Ibid., p. 7.

7. Ibid., p. 8.

8. Ibid., p. 2.

Political Plays

Political Plays

Kāśmīrasandhānasamudyamah

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Nirpaje Bhimabhaṭṭa and published and reprinted from the *Amṛtavāṇī Patrikā* the play, Kāśmīrasandhānasamudyamah as the very title shows, deals with the Kashmir problem. The author wrote this work while he was just a young student but the language of the work is mature and the treatment of the subject scientific; One cannot believe it to have been the work of an immature mind.

The play has seven acts and was successfully staged too.

So far the author is known to have composed only two plays, the present one and the *Hyderābādavijayam*. Both have political themes.

PLOT

First scene — Shyama Prasad Mukherjee enters in an angry mood. He says that so long as he lives, Kashmir cannot fall into the hands of his enemies nor can it be divided. Liyaquat Ali's plans would never succeed. He describes the natural beauty of Kashmir. He thinks that the Kashmir problem should be discussed by the Central Government. Meanwhile Dr. B.N. Khare enters and introduces himself as the member of the Hindu Mahasabha. Both discuss the Kashmir problem. According to Dr. Khare the problem of Kashmir can be solved by the U.N.O. (*United Nation's Organization*) only. But Mukherjee has his own doubts. He wants that Kashmir should not be divided. 'To divide Kashmir would be criminal', says he. He assures Khare that in his life time he would surely strive to find a solution for this vexed problem. After this they both enter the Central Assembly and take part in the discussions there.

Second scene — Liyaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, is shown day-dreaming. He is very happy that Pakistan has come into being and that Islam is flourishing. He has only one desire left now and that is that Kashmir should join Pakistan. U.N.O. has sent Graham to settle the Kashmir problem. Liyaquat Ali Khan wants to influence him (Graham) to side with Pakistan. He goes to the Airport to receive him. He projects his viewpoint in such a way as to convince the visiting dignitary of the correctness of Pakistan's stand and the incorrectness of that of India. But Graham after listening to

all the arguments of Liyaquat Ali says that he cannot decide anything unless he has had an opportunity of hearing Indian representatives too. He also wants to know the viewpoint of the Kashmir Premier Sheikh Abdullah, and the people of Kashmir. Liyaquat Ali still hopes that his evil plans would succeed and he would be able to have Kashmir for Pakistan.

Third Scene—Some leading citizens of India—Rajagopalachari, Jawaharlal Nehru, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and B. N. Khare discuss the problem of Kashmir in the Central Assembly. Nehru explains the whole situation. He says that just after independence the people of the valley stood up against the Maharaja's regime and started an agitation. After five or six months Pakistan sent tribals to attack Kashmir. At this the people of Kashmir sought India's help which was promptly given. Pakistan evidently could not stand this. It sent its army to Kashmir. India has approached the U.N.O. to settle this problem. In answer to the members' queries with regard to the purpose of the present session Nehru says that some people of Kashmir want to join Pakistan while others want to join India. 'This session' says he, 'has to decide this problem'. A member suggests that the problem may be solved by means of a plebiscite. All the members are happy at this. Mukherjee says that we need not always be so particular about peace. There should be a limit to it. If this problem is not solved by peaceful means it should be solved by a resort to war. Nehru and Mukherjee differ in their approach. Nehru wants to follow the path of non-violence, while Mukherjee is in favour of war. Nehru further says that they should accept Graham's decision but Mukherjee says that no outsider has the authority to solve our domestic problems. After some further discussion it is decided to adjourn the session for the next day.

Fourth Scene—Prime Minister Nehru is shocked to learn that Pakistan shifts its policies every time and its attitude towards Indian army is very objectionable. Pakistan wants to have Kashmir at any cost. The Security Council is unable to arrive at any decision. At the same time an attendant informs him that Graham has come to see him. Nehru receives him with due courtesies. They discuss the Kashmir problem in its proper perspective. The picture drawn by Nehru, he feels, is totally different from the one drawn by Liyaquat Ali. Graham now realizes that India's policy is in the right and Pakistan's in the wrong. After reviewing the whole situation Graham thanks Nehru and takes leave of him.

Fifth Scene—To appreciate the Kashmir problem still better Graham leaves

for Kashmir. He is very much impressed by the beautiful scenery of the valley.

Sixth Scene— Sheikh Abdullah and Graham meet each other. Graham discovers that Sheikh Abdullah is fully satisfied with the policy of India. He clearly indicates that there is every possibility of danger from Pakistan. The Sheikh then asks Graham about the places in Kashmir he has seen. Graham replies that he has seen practically all the beautiful places. He is very happy that he has had the opportunity of seeing and talking to the Kashmir Premier. The whole discussion leads to the conclusion that the people of Kashmir want to live with India and not with Pakistan.

Seventh Scene— Mukherjee is worried to learn that while the problem of Kashmir is still pending there has come up another one of Hindu Code Bill. He fears that with the passage of this Bill the 'Sanātana Dharma' of India will be destroyed. All the old concepts and faiths will be shattered. Sheikh Abdullah's plans would never succeed so long as Mukherjee lives (Sheikh Abdullah wants that Kashmir should become independent). He blames Jawaharlal Nehru for not being able to see through the wicked policy of Liyaquat Ali Khan and Sheikh Abdullah. His idea is that these cheats must be taught a lesson.

Eighth Scene— Nehru is elected Prime Minister of independent India and the Congress becomes the ruling party. Nehru is worried about the Kashmir problem. An attendant comes and informs him that Kashmir Premier Sheikh Abdullah has come to see him. Sheikh Abdullah praises Nehru. Nehru also praises Sheikh Abdullah and remarks that "if we go on praising each other like this there can be no end to it. We should come to the point." Nehru asks Abdullah whether the people of Kashmir are happy and fearless. Abdullah tells him that under the control of a country like Bhārata who is there who may not be happy? In one of his speeches he had said that Kashmir wants an independent flag. By this he does not mean an independent Kashmir. Kashmir is a part of India and will remain so. Only the flag will be different. He also tells Nehru that he has come to him to clear misunderstanding. He further tells him that he has decided that Yuvaraj Karan Singh should be the Sadar-i-Riyasat (Governor) of the State.

Hyderābādavijayam

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Nīrpāje Bhīmabhaṭṭa, the Hyderābādavijayam is published in the 1954 issue of the Amṛtavāṇī of Bangalore. It deals with the Hyderabad agitation in post-independence era. In it the learned author shows as to how and why this agitation was started and how the Indian leaders especially Sardar Patel could integrate the State with the Indian Union. The play has one act divided into ten scenes.

PLOT

After Nāndī the stage manager asks the actress to act the play Hyderābādavijayam by Nīrpāje Bhīmabhaṭṭa. The actress has doubts as to whether the play would attract people. She also points out that the first drama of the author (Kāśmīrasandhānasamudyamaḥ) had no female character and this drama probably has the same defect. The stage manager says that the people would surely welcome it because it is full of the feeling of patriotism. *First Scene*— Three Razakars are shown chasing a woman. The helpless lady cries for help but there is none around to help her. The Razakars tease the woman and say that her only salvation lies in her choosing one of them as her husband. The lady wants to end her life but cannot do so. Meanwhile some other Razakars turn up there and ridicule the first three Razakars for their inability to control even a woman. While they are talking thus the woman makes good her escape. The Razakars chase her and again get hold of her and molest her.

Second Scene— A man named Nityanand Shastri is dressed like a Muslim. He notices a Hindu being chased by Muslims. After having a closer look he learns that the man is none else than his friend Ramanand Shastri. Nityanand greets him and tells him to be fearless but Ramanand cannot recognize him and thinking him to be a Muslim runs away but when Nityanand assures him that he is his friend and as a precautionary measure has put on Muslim dress only then does he come near him and they both have heart to heart talk. Nityanand tells Ramanand that he has put on Muslim dress because the Muslim Razakars spare only Muslims and kill Hindus

whenever they find them on the roads. He also tells him that the aim of Kasim Rizvi is to destroy national unity, to stand against Hindus and to spread Muslim rule. While talking they hear the Razakars coming to their side. They both then deem it fit to run away.

Third Scene—Kasim Rizvi and Liyaquat Ali Khan are having a talk with each other. Kasim Rizvi is proud of being the most influential man in Hyderabad. Liyaquat Ali Khan advises him that they should not be contented only by obtaining Hyderabad. They should try to get hold of the whole of India. They both boast of their bravery. Liyaquat Ali wants that Kasim Rizvi should be made the ruler of Hyderabad and that he himself should take over its Prime Ministership. But in their heart of hearts they both fear that the Nizam (of Hyderabad) is a weak man and there is every possibility that he may surrender himself to the Indian Government. They both try their best to make the Nizam a mere puppet in their hands. Success ultimately attends their efforts. The Nizam turns totally a tool in their hands.

Fourth Scene — The Home Minister of India Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is very angry when he hears about the agitation of Razakars. He declares that the situation has reached its climax and that he would have to settle it once and for all.

Fifth Scene — Rajagopalachari is worried over the Razakar agitation. He has succeeded Lord Mountbatten as the Governor General of India. He is very sorry that Mahatma Gandhi is no more with them to guide. He believes that this wicked world was not a suitable place for a saint like Gandhi. After independence the people have become more selfish, greedy and shortsighted. The grave situation of Hyderabad perturbs him. He has a talk with Nehru about the Hyderabad problem. Nehru tells Rajagopalachari that though the British rule has set all States free after independence they have surrendered themselves to India. Only the Nawab of Junagarh and the Nizam of Hyderabad want to keep their States separate and are creating trouble. Meanwhile Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel joins them. He is very much worried about Hyderabad's grave situation. They know that it is due to Kasim Rizvi that the Hyderabad Nizam is not willing to join Indian Union. Nehru suggests that within a few hours they should attack Hyderabad. Both Rajagopalachari and Vallabhbhai Patel support him.

Sixth Scene — Patel sends the chief commander to invade Hyderabad. He instructs him that he should destroy only the oppressors and should not trouble the general masses. He should proceed very cautiously. Patel gives

him blessings and says that he will surely come out victorious.

Seventh Scene — Nizam is disturbed when attacked by India. He wants that war should be stopped and he should join the Indian Union but Kasim Rizvi and Liyaquat Ali assure him that they will surely win and that they should fight with all their might. Nizam is influenced by their false assurance and tells them that they should do whatever they think proper. With the permission of the Nizam they both leave for the battle-field.

Eighth Scene — This introduces us to the scene of the battle. Kasim Rizvi makes a vain attempt to prevent his soldiers from retreating but his army is in disarray and all his efforts to boost its morale prove to be of no avail. Finally Rizvi broken and disheartened himself takes to flight.

Ninth Scene — Nizam is highly unhappy to learn the news of his defeat. Liyaquat Ali comes, offers apologies and confesses that he alone is to blame for all that has happened. It is he who kept the Nizam in the dark with the result that he (the Nizam) overrated the capacity of the army. The Nizam reprimands Liyaquat Ali and pointedly puts the blame on him (Liyaquat Ali) and Kasim Rizvi. He further says that it is they who are responsible for all his insult and humiliation. Now there is no way out except to take shelter in India. On the other hand the commander of the Indian army congratulates his army on the victory and speaks highly of the bravery and heroism of the Indian soldiers.

Tenth Scene — Vallabhbhai Patel is satisfied at the happy turn of events and the successful termination of the hostilities. He says that the day of victory is really the most auspicious one. At this Nehru enters the stage and offers his felicitations to the Sardar for it is on account of his boldness and courage that the success has come. Rajaji too congratulates Patel at this magnificent success and wants to listen to the account of the conquest of Hyderabad in detail. Just at that very moment a messenger comes and gives the news that the commander has come back from the battlefield. At this Sardar Patel says that it is the commander who will give us the full account and with this the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Though the Kāsmīrasandhānasamudayamah and the Hyderābādevijayam are small one-act plays they on account of the nature of their themes abound in characters who appear on the stage for only a short while and that too for a specific purpose. They are only too well known. The portrayal of their character by the author is very faithful. The author presents

them as they were in real life. They are very close to us in point of time and we all know them as to what they were like. A detailed critique on them—the author has not added any thing of his own to the depiction of their character - need not therefore be attempted here.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The Kāsmīrasandhānasamudyamaḥ and the Hyderābādavijayam are two of the very few political plays of this century. The almost total absence of female characters—the Hyderābādavijayam has only one female character and that too in a minor role — in them is their distinguishing characteristic.

Both the plays were written by the author when he was just a student in a Pāṭhaśālā.

Kāsmīrasandhānasamudyamaḥ presents the history of the efforts to integrate Kashmir with India. It gives us in a succinct form the history of the problem of Kashmir, a problem which is very much with us even now. It appears quite interesting to look back at those events of the past which have come to be associated with the problem of Kashmir. From 1954 to 1971 some fourteen years have passed, a fairly long period by all accounts but the problem has dragged on. The hopes of the Indian people in the sense of justice and fairplay of the United Nations Organization stand belied. Even Sheikh Abdullah the one time confidante of Pandit Nehru and supporter of the principle of integration of Kashmir with India has shamefully shifted his ground and is now demanding self-determination for the people of Kashmir. The author possesses rare political insight when he as early as 1954 declares through Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Abdullah to be a traitor and compares the military help rendered to him with milk turned into poison for a serpent:

आः शेखबुदुल्ल । किं काश्मीरान् पृथक् करिष्यसि ? विश्वासघातक आचरितमपि सैन्यसाहाय्यं, क्षीरमिव सपंस्य विषरूपतां प्रापद् भवतः ।¹

The author gives in the Second Scene of the play the dialogue between Liyaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan and Graham U.N.O. representative which from the point of view of dramatic effect is most useful. In it Liyaquat Ali Khan adduces arguments in support of the State's integration with Pakistan. The arguments are more or less the same as are being adduced by Pakistan even now. To put the entire matter in Sanskrit.

1. Kāsmīrasandhānasamudyamaḥ, p.27.

without sacrificing anything of the essential is nothing short of a feat which the author here accomplishes.

To compose a play and that too in Sanskrit on such a difficult theme as the problem of Kashmir with its long-winded history, its ramifications and complications was by no means an easy task. That the author and that too in his younger years could do that speaks volumes for his ability to catch a situation and to present it through a literary expression most effectively. Political consciousness among tradition-bound Sanskritists is indeed a rare phenomenon. To see it in the present author is therefore both a pleasure and a surprise.

The Hyderabadavijayam delineates in fairly good details the policy pursued by India towards Hyderabad in post-independence era. The general policy is to avoid conflict wherever possible but this does not mean that she would submit to blackmail and avoid a military conflict at the risk of the violation of its sovereignty. This is not practical politics. By the annexation of Hyderabad India has shown to the world that India would not slide away from the armed conflict if it were to be forced on it. The clear enunciation of this policy is found in the following words of Sardar Patel which bear full reproduction here :

पटेलः— आः अत्याचारः । स्वतंत्रभारतेऽप्येतादृशी चित्रं हिंसा प्रजानाम् ? किमिदम् ?
 अराजकत्वमनायकत्वं वा देशस्य ? नहि नहि । कासिरिज्वे दोष्यस्य परमावधिः ।
 नारीणां मानहानिं सुजनततिर्हतिं दुर्जनानां प्रभुत्वं
 ह्यैश्वर्यस्यापहारं सकलजनमनोविप्लवापादकत्वम् ।
 दर्श दर्श समग्रं मम हृदि सततं रोषणं चोग्ररूपं
 सञ्जातं रज्ज्वदपौद्धतगिरिकुलिशं लोकशान्तिप्रदायिं ॥¹

"What a cruelty ! Strange, this killing of the people even in independent India ! What is this ? Is it the anarchy in the country or its leaderlessness ? No, No, it is the height of Kasim Rizvi's wickedness. When I see again and again the molestation of women, killing of lots of good people, the domination of the wicked, the plundering of wealth and occasioning agitation in the minds of all the people I am overcome with terrible anger which having proved to be a bolt for the uncontrollable mountain of the conceit of Kasim Rizvi will provide peace to the people."

The atrocities committed by Kasim Rizvi kindle the wrath of the Iron Man of India who in all his fury thunders :

1. p. 27.

उद्यत्तोजःप्रभावप्रतिहतजनताकष्टराशेस्समग्रं
 सैन्यस्यास्मत्प्रयुक्तप्रथितबलवतो युद्धकार्योद्यतस्य ।
 सामर्थ्याद्वितीयादृतसकलभटस्सर्वतो नष्टघैरे
 नश्यत्वाश्वेव रज्ज्विः, जगति सुखमथ प्राप्नुवन्तु प्रजास्ताः ॥¹

"In the world the peace of which has been disturbed all round, let Rizvi come to destruction quickly with all his army perished before the incomparable might of (our) army which is ready to give a fight, which has the reputed strength, the direction of which vests in us and before which the hardships of the people are removed on account of the effect of its rising glory. From now on let the subjects attain happiness."

When the British left India they gave the option to the native States, however small, to either join India or Pakistan or remain independent. This was a clever diplomatic move on their part for they thought that this would sow the seeds of dissention in the country with the result that ultimately it will fall apart. It was at this crucial moment that Sardar Patel devised the Instrument of Accession which led to the ultimate merger of all the former States into the Indian Union. Even Jawaharlal Nehru has to say :

"The British, at the time of leaving for their country gave independence to the rulers who had been owing allegiance to them. This indicates their design of destroying the unity of the country. Even then we have clearly informed the rulers of the Indian States that they have to accept the sovereignty of the Indian Republic. Having realized the significance of our instructions and the position of their own States hundreds of rulers have done well by following our advice at the time of the reorganization of the States. Some of them however gave the indication of some slight pride, still they had no other way out and so followed our advice in due course."¹

Both the works, the Kāśmīrasandhānasamudyamah and the Hyderābādā-vijayam are written in a very pleasant style and are embellished with figures of speech of which simile seems to be the author's favourite. A few of the choicest of these may well be reproduced here by way of illustration :

- (क) शरदिन्दुपरिष्वक्तयामिनीव तमो विना ।
 भाति स्वातन्त्र्यसम्पृक्तविद्वत्परिषदप्यसौ ॥²
 (ख) काश्मीरदेशसमुपागतशत्रुसैन्यं
 प्रातस्तुषारमिव चण्डकरः स्वधाम्ना ।

1. Ibid.

2. Kāśmīrasandhānsamudyamah, p. 2.

सञ्चूर्णयामि समरेऽतिभयंकरेऽपि
को मे रणे पटुभट्टसमबाहुरास्ते ॥¹

(घ) सिंहस्य भीतिरिव नागघटाविनाशे
वज्रस्य पर्वततटाविव शक्तिशङ्का ।
भानोः प्रभाव इव शैत्यविचारचर्चा
सर्वेदुंरूपतना हि निजामशक्तिः ॥²

Among the beautiful examples of metaphor we quote the one below :

मत्तवैरीभकुम्भानां विदारणपटुर्भवान् ।

काश्मीरकानने सिंहो भास्वानिव विराजते ॥³

"You shine like the sun, you are a lion in the forest of Kashmir, expert in tearing off the temples of the intoxicated elephants of the enemies."

The beauty of the Kashmir valley has inspired many a generation of poets and scholars. It inspires the present writer too and brings out the poet in him who takes delight in depicting it in all its gorgeous colours. We reproduce below a few verses where we are face to face with this beauty, enticing, seducing and eluding :

प्रकृतिरतिविदग्धा ताण्डवं रङ्गभूमौ
विलसितनिजरूपा ह्यत्र नृत्यं तनोति ।
विविधतरुसकाशात्कोकिलानां स्तं तत्
प्रतिदिशमपि रम्यं श्रूयते साधु गीतम् ॥⁴

"Here on this stage the highly clever nature playfully exhibiting her form performs the Tāṇḍava dance. From various trees the notes of the cuckoos and from every quarter beautiful nice songs are heard."

काश्मीरलब्धजनुषां वरवर्णिनीना-
मङ्गलानि सङ्गतमनोभववैभवानि ।
उद्यानभूमिपरिवेणरक्तचित्त-
प्राणेश्वरेण परिभुक्तसुखानि मन्ये ॥⁵

"I believe the bodies of the beautiful passionate women of Kashmir have been enjoyed by lovers diverting their minds by trips to the gardens."

1. Ibid., p. 9.

2. Hyderabadavijayam, p. 35.

3. Kāśmīrasandhānasamudiyamah, p. 28.

4. Ibid., p. 20.

5. Ibid., p. 20.

Kashmir is the garden of India. How can then the Indians leave this ? That is why Graham says :

प्रणयोचितसामग्रीसमुत्पादनतत्परम् ।

उद्यानमिदमुत्सृज्य कथं लोकः सुखी भवेत् ॥¹

"How can the people be happy to leave this garden which is busy producing things conducive to love."

The writer has a command over language. The plays being political ones, the language varies in them according to situation. It sometimes becomes harsh, sometimes provocative and sometimes soft.

As an instance of the harsh language we may mention the rather forceful words uttered by proud and conceited Kasim Rizvi who vows to enthrone the Nizam as the king of Hyderabad :

हस्तेनैकेन खड्गं सपदि घृतवता वैरिनाशोद्यतेन

छित्त्वा शीर्षाण्यरीणां सरभसमितो रोषतो भीषणेन ।

साम्राज्यं सर्वमेतत् दिशि दिशि च यशः कान्तिदीप्तं विधाता

हस्तेनान्येन शीर्षोपरि तव मुकुटं धारयिष्यामि राजन् ॥

"O king, in one hand I will carry in a huff a sword which would look terrible due to anger and which would be ready to destroy the enemies, I will chop off with it the heads of the enemies fiercely and with the other I will put a crown on your head which would illumine this whole empire of yours with the lustre of your fame."

As yet another instance we may mention Shyama Prasad Mukherjee's forceful assertion :

आः किमिदम् ? जीवति मुखर्जी को वा काश्मीरानन्यथयितुं प्रभवति ? लियाखता-
लीखानस्य स्वप्नप्रासादस्समूलघातं घात्यतेऽस्माभिः । भवतु । पाकिस्थानसैनिकैः
पर्वतजनैश्चाहन्यमानं काश्मीरदेशं रक्षितुं भारतदेशेन सैन्यसाहाय्यमाचरितम् ।²

"O what is it ? Who can grab Kashmir when Mukherjee is alive? We will completely raze to the ground the dream edifice of Liyaquat Ali Khan. Well, India sent military help to Kashmir to protect it at the time it was being raided by the tribals and the Pakistan army."

As an instance of soft words we mention Nehru's words to Khare where he speaks of harm of mutual conflict and human brotherhood :

आर्य ! परस्परसंघर्षणेन देशस्य हानिः सम्भविष्यतीत्यालोच्यैवमाचरितम् ।

1. Ibid., p. 20

2. Ibid., p. 3.

विश्ववान्धव्यमत्यावश्यकम् । विश्वशान्तिरक्षणार्थमेव हि युक्तराष्ट्रसंस्थापि जनिमलभत । महात्मगांधीपथमनुसरतामस्माकमस्यास्ति रस्कारो न युज्यते ।¹

"Sir, I have done so with the thought that mutual conflicts would harm the country. World fellowship is very necessary. It is for the purpose of the preservation of the world peace that the United Nations Organization came into being. It is not proper for us, who follow the path of Mahatma Gandhi, to be indifferent towards it."

Occasionally we meet in the plays a few instances of the use of high-flown style. As illustrations we reproduce two excerpts, one each from both the plays :

- (१) महाशय ! न तथा । पुण्यभूमौ भारतदेशे समुत्पन्नो भवान् विश्वस्यैव बन्धुः । गङ्गा, सिन्धु, ब्रह्मपुत्रादिपावननदीजलस्नानपानादिभिर्निर्वासितशारीरिकान्तरङ्गिककल्मषः, राम, कृष्ण, तिलक, प्रभृतिमहात्मचरित्रपठनवधितनितानुभावः, अनवरतमहात्मगान्धिसंसर्गादिधगततत्त्वज्ञानोऽत्रभवान् विश्वविभूतिपुरुषः ।²
- (२) भास्वद्भास्करभासमानमहितज्वालावलीभासुर-
प्रोद्यच्छौर्यविराजमानयशसां वीरेस्वराणां भुवि ।
हा हन्तेयमहो दशातिकृपणा या कान्दिशीकोचिता
लोकस्य प्रविलोक्यते विगिति मे चेतस्ततः सीदति ॥
अहो राजनीतिनिपुणस्य सकलराज्यतन्त्रकोविदस्य त्वत्तोऽप्यधिकराजकीयनाडीप-
रीक्षणपण्डितस्य कर्तुं मकर्तुं मन्यथाकर्तुं मपि प्रभोः कांसिरज्वेरपि भवता समुपदेष्टव्यं
नैव विद्येत ।³

The author not unoften employs aphorisms and maxims in his work as may be seen from the following :

- (क) प्रकृतिशूराः खलु भारतीयाः ।⁴
(ख) सामान्यजनैरपस्पृश्यमगम्या राजनीतिः ।⁵
(ग) वक्तुं सुकरं दुष्करमध्यवसातुम् ।⁶
(घ) गतं न शोचयेद्धीमान् ।⁷

1. Ibid., p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. Hyderābāvijayam, p. 24.
4. Kāśmīrasandhānasamudyamah, p. 5.
5. Ibid., p. 13.
6. Ibid., p. 14.
7. Ibid., p. 19.

(ङ) भविष्यदप्यकार्यं सम्भाव्य दूषयितुं हि महीयांसः पटीयांसो भवन्ति ।¹

(च) विपन्नसंरक्षणं हि राज्यघर्मः ।²

(छ) साहसे हि लक्ष्मीः प्रतिवसति ।³

(ज) मार्जारस्य तु लीलायां मूषका विगतासवः ।⁴

(झ) इतो व्याघ्रस्ततः सर्पः ।⁵

(ञ) उक्तं हि विनाशकाले विपरीतबुद्धिः ।⁶

Alliteration comes naturally to the author. He resorts to it frequently and with an ease which imparts a peculiar charm to his work. A few examples will bear us out :

(क) इति प्राज्ञानां प्रज्ञोपज्ञमेतत् ।⁷

(ख) शान्तिरक्षणार्थं विक्रान्तिरेव प्रधानं साधनम् ।⁸

(ग) महीयांसः पटीयांसो भवन्ति ।⁹

(घ) दर्शं दर्शमप्येतादृशीं दशाम् ।¹⁰

(ङ) भास्वद्भास्करभासमानमहितज्वालावलीभासुर..... ।¹¹

(च) कर्तुं मकर्तुं मन्यथाकर्तुं मपि प्रभोः ।¹²

(छ) भाव, युक्तमुक्तं भवता ।¹³

(ज) युद्धाय बद्धभ्रष्टं वर्तते ।¹⁴

While going through the plays we come across here and there either an original quotation from an earlier work, as for example :

सर्वनाशे समुत्पन्ने अर्घं त्यजति पण्डितः¹⁵

which is a quotation from the Pañcatantra, and

1. Ibid., p. 22.
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Ibid., p. 10.
4. Ibid., p. 29.
5. Hyderābādavijayam, p. 36.
6. Ibid., p. 34.
7. Kāśmīrasandhānasaṁmudiyamāḥ, p. 14.
8. Ibid., p. 15.
9. Ibid., p. 22.
10. Ibid., p. 22.
11. Hyderābādavijayam, p. 22.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 2.
14. Ibid., p. 11.
15. Ibid., p. 20.

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्¹

which is a quotation from the Gītā, and

महाकविनोक्तङ्किल ज्वलति चलितेन्धनोऽग्निर्विप्रकृतः पन्नगः फणां कुरुते²

which is a quotation from Kālidāsa's Śākuntalam or the adaptations of the lines and passages from earlier works, as for example :

गतं न शोचयेद्दीमान्³

which is more or less the same idea as : गतं नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः and

विकारेऽप्यसहायत्वेऽप्यविचलितमनोवृत्तित्वं हि धीरलक्षणम्⁴

which is more or less the same idea, though in different words, as found in Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhavam :

विकारहेतौ सति विक्रियन्ते येषां न चेतांसि त एव धीराः ।⁵

In the line

सामान्यजनैरपस्पृश्यमगम्या राजनीतिः⁶

it is not too difficult to detect the presence in the subconscious mind of the author the well known verse of Māgha:

अनुत्सृज्यपदव्यासा सदृष्टिः सन्निबन्धना ।

शब्दविद्येव नो भाति राजनीतिरपस्पृशा ॥⁷

In the Preface to his works the author says that he has used words which are common these days. He has, on this account, begged apology of those who favour the use of the ancient form of the idiom only.⁸ Our perusal of his works, however, has not revealed the presence of many words, not used in older Sanskrit. To us it appears that the author is unnecessarily apologetic. The plays are written in standard Sanskrit in spite of the fact that the author was dealing with current problems.

Besides using ancient forms of words he has, like a true Sanskrit pandit, Sanskritized even non-Sanskrit words. Thus लियाकतअली becomes लायकाली,

1 Ibid., p. 21,

2 Kāśmīrasandhānasamudayamah, p. 5.

3 Ibid., p. 19.

4 Ibid., p. 19.

5 Ibid., I. 59.

6 Ibid., p. 13.

7 Śiśupālavadham, II.112.

8 इदानीन्तनग्रन्थेषु प्राचुर्येण प्रयुज्यमानाः शब्दा एवास्मिन् ग्रन्थे गैर्वाण्यां मया प्रयुक्ताः । प्राचीनभाषैकपक्षपातिभिः क्षन्तव्योऽयमित्यभ्यर्थये ।

वल्लभभाई पटेल, वल्लभायी पटेल and पाकिस्तान, पाकिस्थान and so on.

Here and there we meet with a few excellent word pictures too. One such is reproduced below

काश्मीरसमस्याऽपर्यवसानरोषकषायितनेत्रः प्रलयान्तक इवोद्गिरन् क्रोधवह्निज्वालां,
विकटभ्रुकुटिभङ्गस्तत्रभवान् श्यामप्रसादमुखर्जिमहाशयः केन्द्रशासनसभां प्रतिजिग-
मिपुर्ति एवाभिवर्तते ।¹

"Shri Shyama Prasad Mukherjee is coming this very side on his way to the Central Assembly. His eyes are red and brows terribly knit because the Kashmir problem is still pending. He is emitting fire like the god of death at the dissolution of the world".

The author is a thorough patriot. He has deep love for his country. He takes pride as any patriot should, in the glorious traditions of his country :

प्रकृतिशूराः खलु भारतीयाः । राम, कृष्ण, अभिमन्यु, पृथ्वीराज, राणाप्रतापप्रभृती-
न जननी खल्वियं भारताम्बा । सा कथमिव निर्वीर्यान् प्रसूते तनयान्, सिंहुदराद्
गोमायुर्नैव जनिं लभते ।²

"The Indians are brave by nature. Mother India gave birth to Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Prithviraj and Rana Pratap etc. How can she produce weak sons? Jackals are never born of the lionesses."

1. Kāśmīrasandhānasamudayamah, p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

Social Plays

Social Plays

Parināmaḥ

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Parināmaḥ* is written by Chudanath Bhattarai of Nepal. It has seven acts and 232 pages. It is published by Shrimati Nutanashri in Kathamandu in the year 2016, Vikrama era. It has won considerable praise at the hands of critics.

PLOT

First act— Murāri brings one Candracūḍa, a sick social worker, to his house to give him comfort and homely atmosphere. Ramā, Murāri's wife, is a very simple, purehearted and sentimental lady. She looks after Candracūḍa with love and affection. Candracūḍa is also very much impressed by the selfless devotion of Ramā. Once in the absence of Murāri when Ramā asks Candracūḍa as to how he feels about her husband he (Candracūḍa) praises Ramā and has no hesitation in saying that he (her husband) is a fickle person. After some time Murāri also comes there and discusses some problems with Candracūḍa. Candracūḍa praises Indian traditions and customs but Murāri contradicts him. Candracūḍa is of the opinion that there should be equality among men. Māyā, a friend of Ramā, is the daughter of a doctor. She is an intelligent girl. She is doing B. A. and proposes to study upto M. A. While Murāri and Candracūḍa are discussing various problems Māyā joins them and discusses with them various problems like women's education and religious ideas of the nations. They all praise Ramā for being a perfect housewife.

Second act—Sureśa and Girīśa are two friends. Both are interested in women. Their talk always centres round the beauty of women. Girīśa has a sister named Indumatī. Sureśa is interested in her while Girīśa is attracted towards one Śampā, a beautiful widow from her very childhood. Both Sureśa and Girīśa know Murāri and are also aware of his wife Ramā's intimacy with Candracūḍa. Sureśa thinks that Ramā and Candracūḍa are in love with each other and are befooling Murāri. Girīśa thinks that their intimacy might be like that of brother and sister. While they are engaged in discussions Indumatī (sister of Girīśa) with her friend Māyā (common friend of Ramā and Indumatī) comes there and informs that she has arranged a party

on her success in the examination. She also tells them that the guests are due to arrive shortly. Murāri is one of their guests. He brings with him Gopāla, the brother of widow Śampā. All the people present there criticize Gopāla for marrying his young sister to an old millionaire who could not survive after marriage. They all tell him that he has done it only to lay his hands on the wealth of his dead brother-in-law. Gopāla feels offended and argues in self-defence but to no avail. Their discussion comes to an end when the servant informs them about the meals.

Third act—Sureśa and Indumatī are attracted towards each other. Both are shown strolling in a lonely place and talking on various subjects. Sometimes they talk about capitalism and socialism, sometimes they drift to Gandhism. Candracūḍa (who had attended a party in the house of Gopāla and Śampā) also happens to come there. Candracūḍa, Sureśa and Indumatī talk about miscellaneous subjects. In the evening Sureśa and Indumatī go to one side while Candracūḍa goes to another. He meets Murāri and they talk contemptuously about the intimacy between Sureśa and Indumatī.

Indumatī is writing a novel and she considers Sureśa as the hero of her novel. In the midst of their conversation she opens her heart to Sureśa and tells him that she loves him deeply.

Fourth act—Śampā, Gopāla's young widow sister, receives Ramā and Māyā cordially when they pay her a visit. Śampā tells them frankly that Girīśa often visits her and gives her costly beverage for drinking. Ramā and Māyā know the whole truth. They know that Girīśa is a bad character. He has not spared even his sister Indumatī and now he is up to 'spoil this young innocent widow who has fallen a prey to his lust. Gopāla has made Śampā a good instrument for improving his business. He himself gives liberty to Girīśa to visit Śampā off and on and Girīśa avails himself of this opportunity. Śampā has become pregnant through Girīśa. Gopāla wants that she should be aborted so that they can escape the censure of society.

Indumatī is also pregnant but she is against abortion. Gopāla has now the best opportunity to avenge the insult he suffered at the hands of Sureśa who had told him that he (Gopāla) had selfishly married his young sister to an old man.

Fifth act — Sureśa and Indumatī are sitting under a tree after a long walk. Indumatī loves Sureśa but hates her brother Girīśa who has spoiled her life. They talk about Indian culture. Indumatī firmly tells Sureśa that she would never take to abortion. Sureśa pledges that he loves Indumatī and he would

face the world whatever the consequences. He also condemns Girīśa who has spoiled so many young girls. After some time Murāri comes there. After some discussion Murāri tells Indumatī that he does not approve of a woman being so independent. Sureśa does not like this remark and retorts that Murāri has given so much freedom to his wife Ramā with the result that she has developed too much intimacy with Candracūḍa. Murāri is furious at this. He says that Ramā is a chaste woman and none dare criticize her. He leaves them contemptuously. Indumatī tells Sureśa that he has done wrong by charging Ramā as an unchaste woman but Sureśa is happy for his remarks. *Sixth act* — Murāri is a fickle person. He knows that Ramā is a devoted wife still he is carried away by the comments of Sureśa. He comes home suspicious. Though Ramā is sick he (Murāri) pierces her with sharp words. She says that she has nobody in her mind except Murāri but Murāri does not believe her. He openly tells her that women are never faithful. Ramā is shocked to hear this. She is never accustomed to such scandalous remarks. With choked voice she says that it is her fault that she cannot attend her husband as before. She is weak and sickly. She cannot look after her little daughter. Murāri thinks that Ramā is telling the truth but the words of Sureśa have gone deep into his mind and he cannot get rid of the feeling that Ramā no longer loves him and that she is attracted towards Candracūḍa. Finally he leaves his house and hands over a letter to Ramā which is addressed to Candracūḍa. After some time Candracūḍa comes there and seeing the pathetic condition of Ramā consoles her. Ramā is much worried and she vomits blood. Candracūḍa brings medicine for her by selling his wrist watch. Māyā also comes there to enquire about Ramā's health. Ramā wants to give the letter to Candracūḍa which Murāri had handed over to her but she fears that its contents might pierce his (Candracūḍa's) heart. At last she tells Māyā and Candracūḍa that Murāri has gone for ever and he would never return. She also hands over the letter to Māyā with the request that it may be passed on to Candracūḍa. Candracūḍa faints when he reads the letter. Meanwhile Ramā dies. When Candracūḍa regains consciousness Māyā tells him that Ramā has passed away and has entrusted her little daughter to their care. Candracūḍa laments the death of such a chaste woman. Māyā tells him that Sureśa has succeeded in his vicious desire.

Seventh act — Candracūḍa and Māyā admit the ailing daughter of Ramā to hospital. They are disgusted to see the maltreatment of the patients by

nurses. Nurses themselves take away the food meant for the patients. They sell the medicines in the market. After some time Indumatī is admitted to the same hospital and is allotted the bed next to Ramā's daughter. Candracūḍa and Māyā are astonished to see Indumatī so lean and thin. She tells that she and Sureśa were in prison because they were charged as socialists. Only she has been set free for delivery. Indumatī is taken to delivery room. Then comes the sad news that the child has passed away during the operation. Indumatī also dies shortly afterwards. Candracūḍa and Māyā are shocked at the sad demise of such an intelligent woman. Candracūḍa pledges to remain a bachelor and serve the suffering humanity but he knows that Māyā loves him. They ask for the body of Indumatī but the authorities refuse to do so. Meanwhile Murāri comes in ragged clothes and falls at Candracūḍa's feet. He tells him that it was all his (Murāri's) fault that he condemned his chaste wife Ramā and thus became the cause of her death. He also thinks himself guilty of making Indumatī's and Sureśa's life so miserable. However he requests Candracūḍa that he should marry Māyā. Candracūḍa consents and with this event the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Candracūḍa, Murāri, Sureśa and Giriśa are the principal male characters while Ramā, Māyā, Indumatī and Śampā are the main female characters in the play.

Candracūḍa — He is a social worker. He takes pleasure in serving others but the people do not understand him. He is misunderstood even by his intimate friend Murāri. His whole life is dedicated to the welfare of others. Ramā, the wife of Murāri, has great respect for him. When she falls ill it is Candracūḍa who helps her. He is a wideawake man, He shows keen interest in world affairs. He is a strict follower of Gandhiji.

चन्द्रचूडः (सहर्षम्)-आध्यात्मिकोन्नतिं प्राप्तुं विलासमयजीवनं परित्यज्य साधारणजीवन-निवर्हि यतनीयमित्यभाषत महात्मा गान्धिः ।¹

"Candracūḍa (with joy) — Mahatma Gandhi said that for the purpose of moral upliftment (we) should give up easy ways of living and try to live an ordinary life."

चन्द्रचूडः — सुखमनुभवामि सेवायाम् । समासादितं तत्र धर्मरहस्यम् । सत्यं परामृशामि परोपकारः पुण्याय पापाय परपीडनमिति । आदर्शस्तु सङ्केतयति मामभी-

1. Third act, pp. 92,93.

क्षणम् । स्वद्येये नक्तन्दिवं चावितुं प्रयस्यामि किन्तु ग्लपयति परिस्थितिः ।¹

"Candracūḍa — I derive happiness from service. I have realized in it the secret of *dharma*. I think it is true that doing good to others leads to religious merit while giving trouble leads to sin. The ideal beckons to me again and again. I try to run towards my aim day and night but circumstances dishearten me."

He is ready to help each and everybody. When *Ramā* is ill he looks after her. When she dies he takes care of her daughter. He takes her to hospital for treatment. When he sees that *Indumatī* has died and there is none to perform her obsequies he covers her body with his own shawl and performs the last rites himself. In every respect he is an ideal man; the present society is responsible for destroying his future career.

Murāri — He is a fickle person. Though he talks high philosophy he is actually an ordinary man given to hatred and jealousies. He knows only too well that his wife is a chaste and pure woman but when *Sureśa* tells him that she has illegitimate relations with *Candracūḍa* he at once believes. This is the weakest point of his character. He cannot control himself. He pierces the heart of *Ramā* with sharp words. He is burning with jealousy against *Sureśa* and *Indumatī* and harms them both.

Giriśa and Sureśa — They are good friends. Their main interest is to talk about woman and her beauty. Woman is the centre of attraction for them. *Giriśa* spoils his own sister *Indumatī* and has developed intimacy with *Śampā* while *Sureśa* is attracted towards *Indumatī*. Both think that there can be no relation between man and woman except the sexual. They condemn *Candracūḍa* and *Ramā* for their intimacy. *Giriśa* has illegitimate intimacy with *Śampā*. He satisfies himself as well as takes money from her. When she becomes pregnant he gets a medicine for her abortion. He is a characterless man who never cares for anything else except sexual enjoyment. *Sureśa*, though belonging to the same category, is a faithful lover. He loves *Indumatī* and promises to marry her. Unfortunately she dies in the prime of her youth with the new born baby.

Ramā — She is an ideal of Indian womanhood. She is a devoted wife who takes care of the ailing friend of her husband. But unfortunately this incident ruins her life. The intimacy which she develops during the ailment of *Candracūḍa* brings disaster to her. The jealous friends of fickle-minded

1. Third act, p. 96.

Murāri poison his mind and he blames his innocent wife for nothing. She knows that Candracūḍa is a good man who has helped her a lot but she cannot make her husband understand the real situation. The misunderstanding between the husband and the wife is responsible for all her miseries and ultimately for her ruin and death.

Māyā — A fast friend of Ramā, she respects Candracūḍa for his selfless service to humanity. She is a student and proposes to do M.A. Being the daughter of a doctor she is interested in medicine. When Ramā dies only Māyā and Candracūḍa are by her side and she assures Ramā that she would take care of her baby. She tells Candracūḍa that she loves him and would like to be his wife and serve the suffering humanity. Her desire is fulfilled when Murāri requests Candracūḍa to marry her.

Indumatī — A modern girl of independent nature, she does everything openly. If she loves Sureśa she does not want to conceal it. If she becomes pregnant before marriage she is not hesitant to become mother. The only tragedy of her life is that she is a misfit in Indian society. The people like Murāri openly criticize her. Her socialistic ideas are not liked by the Government and both she and Sureśa are put behind the prison bars. She is released for delivery. But death releases her from all the cares and the worries of her life.

Śampā — She is an innocent girl who suffers due to her brother's utmost selfishness. She is married to an old millionaire who dies when she is only a child. She is a widow from childhood. When she comes of age she comes under the influence of Girīśa, a bad character, who makes her drink and deprives her of chastity as well as money.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

One of the bigger plays *Parīṇāmah* occupies an important place among the dramas of the twentieth century. Opinions differ on its true evaluation. Some have pronounced it a classic while others are content by pronouncing it as just a good play. The play marks a departure from the ordinary plays with a stereotyped theme and technique. It has no Prakrit, no Bharatavākya, no Viṣkambhaka, no Vidūṣaka, no songs, not even verses except those which are reproduced here and there from earlier works from the Śruti onwards. The playwright gives us prose, endless prose, dialogues which have no sparkle in them, high philosophy of Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Emerson and others which fail to interest the reader. The worst criticism against the play pertains to the fact that it has little dramatic element in it, the story is too

involved to be clear and intelligible in the first reading, the prose is too highflown and flowery at times to be suitable for a play. Appropriately it may be called a dramatic novel rather than a drama.

The author has a good command over the expression but it is sad to find that at times it fails him rather badly. He allows some definitely wrong and grammatically indefensible formations. Among these mention may be made of *bhraṃsyati*¹ which should be *bhraṃsiṣyate*, √ *bhraṃs* being palatal-ending and *ātmanepadi*; *viśvasāmaḥ*² which may be a misprint for *viśvasimāḥ*; *katipayāḥ*³ which should be *katipaye*; *eṣo varīvarti*⁴ which should be *eṣa varīvarti*; *viśramante*⁵ which should be *viśrāmyanti*; *samālocatu*⁶ which should be *samālocayatu* (√ *loc* being of the Tenth Conjugation); *pratipādito viśayas tu vilokaye*⁷; which should be *pratipāditam viśayam tu vilokaye*; *kṛtānūnn api*⁸ which should be *kṛtānūn api*, *namuṣ* being not possible due to Pāṇini enjoining it to a preceding short vowel : *namo hrasvādaci namuṣ nityam*, (8. 3. 32); *kāmī saṅlakṣaye tam dhūrtam*⁹ which should be *kāminam saṅlakṣaye tam dhūrtam*; *vikrīṇāmi*¹⁰ which should be *vikrīṇe*, the *ātmanepada* being enjoined to √ *kṛī* with *vi* by Pāṇ. *parivyavebhyaḥ kriyaḥ* (1. 3. 18); *sampitvā*¹¹ which should be *sampīya*, vide., Pāṇ. *samāsenañpūrve ktvo lyap* (7. 1. 37); *sañjāyata atrāpi*¹² which should be *sañjāyatetrāpi*; *dva eva*¹³ (a very bad mistake of sandhi) which should be *dve eva*, the *prakṛtibhāva* being enjoined to *e* in the dual by Pāṇ. *īdūdeddvivacanam pragrhyam* (1. 1. 11.); *glāpayati*¹⁴ which should be *glapayati* by Pāṇ. *mitām hrasvaḥ* (6. 4. 92); *tūṣṇīm āsyē*¹⁵ which should be *tūṣṇīm āse*; *siddhāntavanti siddhāntā api te*¹⁶ which should be

1. Second act, p. 53.
2. Second act, p. 60.
3. Second act, p. 61.
4. Second act, p. 62.
5. Third act, p. 81.
6. Third act, p. 81.
7. Ibid.
8. Third act, p. 97.
9. Fourth act, p. 103.
10. Fourth act, p. 116.
11. Fourth act, p. 119.
12. Fourth act, p. 121.
13. Fourth act, p. 123.
14. Second act, p. 45.
15. Sixth act, p. 170.
16. Sixth act, p. 189.

*siddhāntavantah siddhāntā api te; Vaidyaśāstram adhunā kena ca adhyeyaḥ*¹ which should be *Vaidyaśāstram adhunā kena ca adhyeyam; Śureśo' prārthayat*² which should be *Śureśaḥ prārthayata*. (a big blunder not expected of this writer); *mṛtyuśayyāyām adhiṣete*,³ which should be *mṛtyuśayyām adhiṣete*, *adhiṣi* becoming *karma* by Pāṇ. *adhiṣiṣṭhāsām karma* (1. 4. 46); *kim avidhāyi*⁴ which should be *kim vyadhāyi; senāsu prati*⁵ which should be *senāḥ prati* (*prati* being *karmapraavcanīya*); *vilāṅghathah*⁶ which should be *vilāṅghadhve*, *√langh* being *atmanepadī*; *glāyayasi*⁷ which should be *glapayasi*; *vyasīryati*⁸ which should be *viśīryate*.

In gender too the poet shows confusion. The play abounds in errors of *lingavyatyāsa*. The word *lekha* which is masculine is used by the writer in the neuter : *sarvāṇi mama lekhāni dagdhvā*⁹; *dvandva* which is neuter is used by him in the masculine : *siddhāntayor eva dvandvaḥ pracalati*¹⁰; *samāja* which is masculine is used by him in the neuter; *samājam unnatimārge nīyate*¹¹; *añjali* which is masculine is used by him in the feminine : *rāṣṭritāyai dattā kim iti jalāñjaliḥ*¹² and *pratikṣāyai na mayā dattā jalāñjaliḥ*¹³; *siddhānta* which is masculine is used by him as neuter : *idam eva siddhāntam*¹⁴; *koṣa* which is masculine is used by him in neuter : *mūlakoṣam eva lāvaṇyasya*¹⁵; *nirmāṇa* which is neuter is used by him in the masculine : *nirmāṇas tv-avaśyambhāvi*¹⁶.

Occasionally the writer omits the causal suffix where it is necessary : *samājasya bandhanam truṭitvā śvacchandam vihartum api naiva śaknoti varākī*¹⁷

1. Seventh act, p. 199.
2. Seventh act, p. 203.
3. Seventh act, p. 223.
4. Fifth act, p. 157.
5. Fifth act, p. 159.
6. Fifth act, p. 163.
7. Fifth act, p. 171.
8. Sixth act, p. 138.
9. Third act, p. 78.
10. Fifth act, p. 136.
11. First act, p. 21.
12. Fifth act, pp. 159-60.
13. Seventh act, p. 216.
14. Third act, p. 99.
15. Third act, p. 82.
16. Third act, p. 94.
17. Third act, p. 85.

where *truṭitvā* should have been *troṭayitvā*; *tutruṭiṣāmi bandhanaśṅkhalāṃ samājusya*¹ where *tutruṭiṣāmi* should have been *tutroṭayiṣāmi*; *duṣyati hetvābhāso'numānam*² where *duṣyati*, should have been *dūṣayati*; *mṛṣyante ...tādr̥ṣīm duḥkhavahnikaṇikām*³ where *mṛṣyante* should have been *marṣayanti*.

An odd instance of the wrong use of the passive too is found in the work; e. g. *na jñāyase*⁴ should have been *na jānīṣe*; *kaḥ kastūrikāmodaṃ śapathena nivāryeta*,⁵ *nivāryeta* should have been *nivārayet*.

The playwright not unoften resorts to superfluity of expression which detracts from the good quality of the work. A few illustrations would make the point clear. The author says : *tava prītir unnayati mām upari*⁶. The same superfluity is found in *tādr̥ṣo vicāro' nuṇṇayaty upari*⁷. Here *upari* is evidently superfluous. *Unnayana* itself is *uparinayana*. Then why use *upari* along with it ? In *pratijāne pratijñām*⁸ simply *pratijāne* would do. This is a case of a verb with a cognate object. In *kalāyā udbhavas tūdagāt pūrvadiṣi*⁹ the use of *udagāt* with *udbhava* is not proper. For, what difference is there in *udaya* and *udbhava*. The author could better have said *kalāyā udbhavo jātaḥ*. In *janam api hṛtvā jihūrṣanti, hṛtvā*¹⁰ seems to be unnecessary. If the people have already been taken away (*hṛtvā*) what then have they been left with to like to carry away ? A very beautiful case of tautology is furnished by the author's use of the expression *paścāt paścāttāpaṃ nirviśataḥ*¹¹. Occasionally the wrong use of the preposition too is met with in this work. *√Jñā* with *ava* means to ignore; to treat contemptuously. *Ava* must modify the sense of *jñā* which is 'to know'. But the author seems to be oblivious of this fact. That is why he uses *avajñā* in the sense of knowing only : *avajñāsi cet vada sakhi kretuṃ kutra prāpyate*¹².

1. Fifth act, p. 143.
2. Fifth act, p. 151.
3. Fifth act, p. 161.
4. Fifth act, p. 160.
5. Third act, p. 76.
6. Third act, p. 89.
7. Second act, p. 60.
8. Third act, p. 92.
9. Fifth act, p. 134.
10. Fifth act, p. 137.
11. Fourth act, p. 112.
12. Fourth act, p. 111.

A peculiarity of the language of the work which strikes the eyes of the reader as he goes along is the new coinages. The author has either introduced into his works, though rarely, the vernacular words like *katorī*¹ *ciyā*² (hot tea) or given us Sanskrit equivalents of them which are his own coinages. As examples we may mention *kāñcakupikā*³ for bottle or phial, *nīvināda*⁴ for capitalism, *puruṣottama*⁵ for superman, *soṣyanti*⁶ for delivery.

Connected with this is the influence on the language of the writer of the Hindi or the vernacular idiom. To a certain extent this was inevitable, for the author was dealing with some of the modern concepts like capitalism, Marxism, Gandhism and the philosophies of Bergson, Russel and Emerson etc. The language therefore becomes fitful and has no uniformity in it. At places it is highflown having a classical ring about it but at others it is ultramodern with a Hindi tinge about it; in one or two places it borders on vulgarity too, as for example:

तत्रैव पच्यते भुज्यते सुप्यते हग्यते च ।⁷

Reproduced below are some of the expressions where the Hindi or vernacular influence seems to be quite prominent :

(क) स्कन्धेन स्कन्धं संयोज्य समाजमुन्नतिमार्गे नीयते ।⁸

There is clear influence of Hindi idiom here. In Hindi we would have said:

कन्धे से कन्धा मिला कर समाज को उन्नति के मार्ग पर ले जाया जा रहा है ।

(ख) धन्यवादान् ददामि ।⁹

(ग) ईदृशी भिन्नतार्थिकदृष्टिकोणे ।¹⁰

(घ) यान्त्रिकेऽस्मिन् वैज्ञानिकयुगे परित्यज्य यन्त्रं स्वात्मनिर्भरग्रामनिर्माणे पूर्ववत्तुरीवे-
मादिकमेव कथं स्वीकुर्महे ।¹¹

1. First act, p. 3.
2. Fourth act, p. 126.
3. Fourth act, p. 111.
4. Fifth act, p. 138.
5. Fifth act, p. 136.
6. Seventh act, p. 226.
7. Seventh act, p. 223.
8. First act, p. 21.
9. Second act, p. 36.
10. Second act, p. 38.
11. Third act, p. 78-79.

(ङ) न भरति चोदरम् ।¹

(च) तादृशि कर्मणि मनो न लगति ।²

(छ) आधुनिकाः साम्यवादिनो वा सुधारवादिनो ये केचन.....³

It may in passing be remarked here that the author has not been found lacking in his conscious efforts to impart a classical touch to his work and the modernisms that have crept into his work, cannot alter this basic fact. As a matter of fact the author has constantly tried to approximate to the old classical style and the demands of the modern age to break away from it. That is why we meet with in his work the kind of Hindisms noted above and the fondness for recondite secondary formations such as पेपीयते⁴, मेम्रीये⁵, रारटिमि⁶, चिकृक्षन्ति⁷, जेहीयते⁸, रारट्यते⁹, आरिप्सते¹⁰, व्यापीपदन्¹¹, निरपीपदन्¹², जिगलिषति¹³, तुत्रोटयिषन्ति¹⁴, व्यचीचरत्¹⁵, वरीवर्ति¹⁶, चेक्षीयन्ते¹⁷, चिबिलषन्ते¹⁸, दरिदृश्यते¹⁹, चेक्षीयते²⁰, चङ्क्रमीति²¹, उदजीघटत्²², चेक्षिष्यन्ते²³, जिहीषन्ति²⁴, प्रत्यपीपदन्²⁵, परीपृच्छ्यते²⁶, व्यचीचरत्²⁷, जिश्चयिषति²⁸, वर्वर्ति²⁹, अचीक्लृपत्³⁰, अनुमेमीयन्ते³¹ or occasional use of such rather unfamiliar words as

कुर्वैटिका³², अवटीटा³³, प्रष्ठ³⁴, वह्य³⁵, दहराकाश³⁶

1. Third act, p. 91.
3. Seventh act, p. 212.
5. First act, p. 9.
7. First act, p. 18.
9. First act p. 21.
11. Second act, p. 47
13. Second act, p. 58.
15. Fifth act, p. 154
17. Third act, p. 74
19. Third act, p. 77.
21. Third act, p. 99.
23. Fifth act, p. 134.
25. Fifth act, p. 149.
27. Fifth act, p. 154.
29. Seventh act, p. 204.
30. Seventh act, p. 210.
31. Seventh act, p. 219.
32. Second act, p. 43.
33. Second act, p. 47.
34. Fourth act, p. 103.
35. Fourth act, p. 106.
36. Fifth act, p. 157.

2. Fifth act. p. 131.
4. First act, p. 3.
6. First act, p. 14.
8. First act, p. 19.
10. Second act, p. 28.
12. Second act p. 52.
14. Second act, p. 57.
16. Fourth act, p. 124.
18. Third act, p. 74.
20. Third act, p. 95.
22. Third act, p. 102.
24. Fifth act, P. 137.
26. Fifth act, p. 153.
28. Fifth act, p. 170.

To this very desire of his to impart a classical touch to his work is due the tendency in him to model his prose on that of the Kādambarī. The work has a number of such passages where the reader is treated to a style which he would have scarcely expected in a composition like this which goes by the name of a drama. There are no long compounds here, only short sentences, coming in quick succession with a chain of verbs similar in form imparting symmetry and raciness to the composition and helping bring out the emotions vividly and graphically. It is these paragraphs in a drama which no doubt lend a charm and colour to it. A few of them are reproduced below by way of illustration of what has been said above :

- (क) विमृशामि कया रीत्या आह्वय इति । वत्से इत्यतिप्रणयः, मातः इति चाटुः, भगिनि इत्यात्मसंभावना, भद्रे इतीतरस्त्रीसमुचितम्, बाले इत्यगौरवोपेतम्, सुन्दरि इति प्रणयपरिचयः, आर्ये इति जरारोपणम्, भवति इति सर्वसाधारणम् ।¹
- (ख) मदयति मदिरा, तरलयति तारुण्यम्, अन्धयति घनम्, उत्पथयति मन्मथः, विरूपयति रूपाभिमानः, खर्वयति गर्वं इति ।²
- (ग) वासु, मयाप्यैभि घनिकसन्ततिः । किन्तु त्वमसि तृप्तिरिव समाजस्य, रसायनमिव तारुण्यस्य, मूलकोषमिव लावण्यस्य, ज्योत्स्नेव प्रणयचन्द्रोदयस्य ।³
- (घ) अणुरपि सृणिरिव, हुंकार इव क्रान्तेः, ओंकारमिव शान्तेः, मित्रं मृत्योः, अपत्यम-मृतस्य, भूमिरसि समाजमनोरथानाम् ।⁴
- (ङ) शृणु बाले, यदा मस्तिष्कचक्रे परिभ्रमति वेदना, व्रणयति हृदयकुहरे यातना, आतङ्कयति विध्वंसो मानसं, विचेतयते चित्तामासक्तिः, अङ्कयति प्रतिष्ठां लक्ष्यं, कल्पयति भीतिरात्मानम्, ऊनयति प्रक्रिया प्रकृतिं, गर्हयति शरीरं त्वरा, घोषयति निरर्थकं तर्कः, छादयति मेघां मोहः, तर्पयति ग्लानिलालिसाम् ।⁵

At places the author's language is characterized by alliteration too, some of the delightful examples of which are given below :

- (क) अलमनल्पजल्पनेन ।⁶
- (ख) पुरा सुरासुरैरसुरैर्भूसुरैरपि सेविता ।⁷

1. First act, p. 17.
2. Second act, p. 31.
3. Third act, p. 82.
4. Ibid.
5. Seventh act, p. 217-218.
6. Second act, p. 52.
7. Second act, p. 54.

- (ग) विश्राणयति प्रणयिने प्राणान् प्रेयसी ।¹
 (घ) नहि तं विहितं विद्यते तेषां तत्र ।²
 (ङ) कोकिला इव मदकलकाकली कोमलालापिनी त्वमसि प्रिये ।³
 (च) कारणमेव कलिकालस्य कलौ कीर्तनं सञ्जातम् ।⁴
 (छ) अनयोः ललाटतटे निकटे विकटं दुःखं नटति ।⁵
 (ज) अशुभशुभावशिवविशा विशारवः शरीरनिर्माणपरमाणवः ।⁶
 (झ) व्यर्थं किमर्थं कदर्थयसि ।⁷
 (ञ) सकललोककवलेहलम्पटा लेढि लोहिताचिता चिताङ्गारकाली कालरात्रिजिह्वा जीवितानि जीविनाम् ।⁸

The author frequently punctuates his work with a number of pithy sayings. His language is highly idiomatic at places :

- (क) अतत्त्वदर्शिन्यो हि भवन्त्यविदग्धानां धियः ।⁹
 (ख) क्षमासारा हि साधवः ।¹⁰
 (ग) गृहदाहे नहि वह्निरपराध्यति ।¹¹
 (घ) प्रतापसहाया हि सत्त्ववन्तः ।¹²
 (ङ) अतिरोषणश्चक्षुष्मानन्ध एव जनः ।¹³
 (च) उज्ज्वलप्रयोगः परिणामं शङ्क्यत्येव ।¹⁴
 (छ) महिषस्याग्रे मृदङ्गवादनामिव सञ्जातम् ।¹⁵
 (ज) अलङ्कारो हि परमार्थतः प्रभवतां प्रश्रयातिशयः ।¹⁶
 (झ) दुरतिक्रमणीया देवस्य वामा वृत्तयः ।¹⁷

1. Third act, p. 70.
2. Third act, p. 74.
3. Fourth act, p. 114.
4. Fourth act, p. 125.
5. Sixth act, p. 185.
6. Seventh act, p. 185.
7. Seventh act, p. 200.
8. Seventh act, p. 231.
9. First act, p. 5.
10. First act, p. 7.
11. Third act, p. 86.
12. Third act, p. 89.
13. Second act, p. 54.
14. Fifth act, p. 145.
15. Fifth act, p. 159.
16. Fifth act, p. 161.
17. Seventh act, p. 195.

(ज) परावृत्तभागधेयानां दुःखं दुःखानुबन्धि ।¹

The author is also given to the habit of repeating his words. The sentence *upary upary eva plavase*² has been repeated by him at least thrice in his work. The same is the case with the stage-direction *karuṇakāhalena svarena roditi*.³ There are a number of instances in the work where the same idea has been expressed by the writer in slightly different words. There the superiority of the love of one's kith and kin or any other thing is expressed by the writer in different ways in his work :

(क) अथवातिदुर्धरो बान्धवप्रणयः सर्वप्रमाथी ।⁴

(ख) लोहेभ्यः कठिनतराः खलु स्नेहमया बन्धनपाशाः ।⁵

(ग) अलोह खलु संयमनपाशः स्नेहः ।⁶

(घ) लोके लोहेभ्यः कठिनतमाः स्नेहमया बन्धनपाशाः ।⁷

Similarly the idea of

पिशाचानामिव नीचात्मनां चरितानि छिद्रप्रहारीणि प्रायशो भवन्ति⁸
is found expressed in somewhat different words in

छिद्रप्रहारिणी नीचात्मनां मतिर्भवति ।⁹

Again the inexorableness of unfavourable destiny finds expression at the hands of the author in at least two places in identical words :

(क) परावृत्तभागधेयानां दुःखं दुःखानुबन्धि ।¹⁰

(ख) दुरतिक्रमणीया देवस्य वामा वृत्तयः ।¹¹

One of the peculiarities of the work which deserves special notice here is the profusion in it of popular lines from old well known works which either appear specifically as quotations in it within the inverted commas or are prefaced by the name of their writer but more generally introduced as

तथा चाह कविः; तथा चोक्तम्; उक्तञ्च

1. Seventh act, 230.
2. First act, p. 13, Second act, p. 50, Fifth act, p. 157.
3. Seventh act, p. 231.
4. First act, p. 4.
5. First act, p. 6.
6. First act, p. 23.
7. Sixth act, p. 179.
8. Fourth act, p. 106.
9. Sixth act, p. 194.
10. Seventh act, p. 230.
11. Seventh act, p. 195.

or have been interwoven into the text with the least changes and modifications in them to form part of the text. It is these latter—they are quotations, though not stated specifically—which have imparted a peculiar touch to the present work. The reader is struck with their enormity and variety. The occurrence of a few expressions from older works is not an uncommon phenomenon in modern writings. Their occurrence in them is explained away on the basis of the influence exercised by the celebrated writers and their works on the minds of the present day writers who in spite of themselves would come out with the expressions which are present in their subconscious mind. But here we are not dealing with a few odd instances. We are face to face with the largest single block of lines and expressions used in this work. All this seems intentional and deliberate. While on the one hand they show the author's mastery over the ancient lore, on the other, they open the writer to the charge of plagiarism. It may not be possible here to give a complete and exhaustive list of such expressions. Still the following few will do by way of illustration of what we have said above :

- (क) पावकः खल्वेष वचनोपन्यासः ।¹
- (ख) शपथेनापि निवार्यते कुत्र कस्तूरिकामोदः ।²
- (ग) विदुषामापरितोषाद् न प्रीणाति हृदयम् ।³
- (घ) सापि सृष्टिराद्येव धातुर्भवेत् ।⁴
- (ङ) अथवा भवितव्यताया द्वाराणि भवन्ति सर्वत्र ।⁵
- (च) मित्र, न धर्मवृद्धेषु वयः समीक्ष्यते ।⁶
- (छ) प्रवातेऽपि निष्कम्पा गिरय इत्येतदपि तिरोहितं भवति ।⁷
- (ज) मित्र अनुग्रह एवेयमभ्यर्थना ।⁸
- (झ) विकारं खलु परमार्थतोऽज्ञात्वाऽनारम्भः प्रतीकारस्य ।⁹
- (ञ) संशयच्छेदि वचनम् ।¹⁰

- 1. First act, p. 10.
- 2. First act, pp. 17-18.
- 3. Second act, p. 28.
- 4. Second act, p. 30.
- 5. Second act, p. 32.
- 6. Second act, p. 34.
- 7. Second act, p. 35.
- 8. Second act, p. 37.
- 9. Second act, p. 59.
- 10. Second act, p. 59.

- (ट) ग्रन्थः किल द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यश्च ।¹
- (ठ) न कोऽपि व्यपोहति शारदीं ज्योत्स्नां पटान्तेन ।²
- (ड) विवक्षितं ह्यनुक्तमनुतापं जनयति । स्वैरं भणतु । अभिन्नहृदयो जनस्तव समीपे वर्तते ।³
- (ढ) कः कस्तूरिकामोदं शपथेन निवार्येत ।⁴
- (ण) न ह्याशंसे प्रशंसामस्मिन् कर्मणि, श्रद्धया देयं संविदा देयम् ।⁵
- (त) न माननीयेष्वात्मानमपराधयिष्ये ।⁶
- (थ) विमृशतु व्यपदेशमाविलयितुं नाहमपीहे ।⁷
- (द) किमर्थमभिनविशसे, त्वमर्हतां प्राग्रसरः स्मृतोऽसि ।⁸
- (घ) ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा योगिनोऽपि तं पश्यन्ति ।⁹
- (न) तवाधरः किसलयरागः कोमलविटपानुकारिणौ बाहू, कुसुममिव लोभनीयं यौवनं दर्शं दर्शं त्वां कल्पयामि कल्पलताम् ।¹
- (प) किञ्च विनाशकाले विपरीता बुद्धिर्भवति ।¹¹
- (फ) परोपदेशे पाण्डित्यं सुकरं विद्यते ।¹²
- (ब) सखे वरः सत्त्वेष नाशीः ।¹³
- (भ) तदा तवाराधयिता जनस्तव समीपे वर्तते ।¹⁴
- (म) यौवने पितरं परित्यज्य स्त्रियः समाश्रयन्ति पतिं, भर्ता रक्षति यौवने ।¹⁵
- (य) मूढः परप्रत्ययनेयबुद्धिर्भवति ।¹⁶
- (र) तस्मादेव त्वां मुञ्चतो नास्ति मे व्यथा ।¹⁷

1. Second act, p. 61.
2. Second act, p. 68.
3. Third act, p. 69.
4. Third act, p. 76.
5. Third act, p. 83.
6. Third act, p. 87.
7. Third act, p. 91.
8. Third act, p. 96.
9. Third act, p. 98.
10. Fourth act, p. 114.
11. Fourth act, p. 128.
12. Fifth act, p. 130.
13. Fifth act, p. 141.
14. Fifth act, p. 143.
15. Sixth act, p. 168.
16. Sixth act, p. 169.
17. Sixth act, p. 175.

- (ल) मृत्यवे त्वां न ददामि ।
 (व) स्वाधिकारात्प्रमत्त उत्कोचार्थी न्यायमपवदते ।²
 (श) जाते न युक्तं नाम ते तथा पुरा रुग्णावस्थायां स्थितमिमं जनं संसेव्य साम्प्रतमीदृशैः
 वचनैः प्रत्याख्यातुम् ।³

Now coming to the dramatic element we find many deficiencies. For one thing it has no suspense. The story just moves on drably, there are no sharp turns and twists in it. There are certain incongruities in it too. The appearance of Murāri at the end is too sudden and without any justification. Again it is not possible to understand as to how and why Murāri thinks himself responsible for Indumatī's death. Again it is not clear as to what dramatic justification there was in showing Indumatī's death.

The play lacks humour. The author has made it too serious, too deep and too philosophical to depict the lighter side of life. The play is a tragedy. It depicts the double tragedy of Ramā and Indumatī. The prominent sentiment in it is that of pathos (Karuṇa). The helplessness of the poor, their pitiable condition due to grinding poverty, the demoralization of society on account of it is what has been described by the author with a vividness and picturesqueness that cannot fail to impress the audience. The play is unique and occupies a distinct place among Sanskrit dramas of this century.

1. Sixth act, P. 183.
2. Sixth act, P. 184.
3. Sixth act, P. 189.

Parivartanam

INTRODUCTORY

The play *Parivartanam* is written by Kapila Deva Dvivedi. It has five acts and 34 pages. It is published from Lucknow.

The play deals with a burning problem of the day, the problem of dowry, which is eating into the vitals of the Hindu society. Shri K. A. Subramania Iyer, former Head, Department of Sanskrit, Lucknow University while writing the Preface¹ to the play points out that its plot has not been taken from earlier history, it is the author's own creation. This play faithfully reflects the changes that have come about in Indian society on account of its contact with its Western counterpart. Its very title *Parivartanam* meaning 'change' is suggestive enough and is perfectly justified by the theme. Among the social plays written in the present century the present play, though small, occupies a prominent place.

PLOT

First act—Śaṅkara, a very generous, simple and religiousminded man has a daughter named Snehalatā. He has brought her up according to Indian traditions. She has become of age and he is now worried about her marriage. He sends one of his friends Mādhavya to his other friend who is putting up in a nearby village and has an educated son. Mādhavya goes there to enquire as to whether he is willing to marry his son Śambhudatta to Snehalatā but he says that Śambhudatta should himself decide about his marriage. Śambhudatta agrees to marry only on the condition that the father of the girl should give him ten thousand rupees for purchasing a car. Mādhavya is surprised because he knows that his friend Śaṅkara does not have this much of money to give but when he sees that both the father and the son are adamant, he gives his consent and goes to inform Śaṅkara, about the whole incident.

Second act—Śaṅkara is eagerly waiting for Mādhavya. But when Mādhavya informs him about the demand he feels sad. He has not enough money to buy a car. Still he is aware that his daughter's marriage is impossible without money. He has a talk with a landlord for the sale of his house to

1. Upodghātaḥ, p. nil.

arrange for the required money. He wants to sell the house but likes to keep the well and the steps (of the well) for his wife because in the summer some shopkeepers sit there and pay rent for it. The landlord agrees and the deal comes off. Śaṅkara tells the landlord that he would vacate the house after his daughter's marriage. He also hands over a letter to Mādhavya signifying his consent to the marriage, for posting it to the boy's parents. Mādhavya drops it in the letter box.

Third act — On the appointed day the marriage party comes. The bridegroom is a westernized young man. He has passed the P.C.S. examination. He has no *śikhā* or *yajñopavīta*. He cannot pronounce the Sanskrit *mantras* correctly; nor does he know their meanings. The Purohita is very much disappointed when he hears from the mouth of a Brāhmaṇa such mispronunciation of Sanskrit *mantras*.

Fourth act — After the marriage Śaṅkara becomes penniless. On the other hand the landlord who had purchased his house comes and asks him to vacate it. Śaṅkara leaves his wife Śāntā there and himself accompanies Mādhavya to Bombay. After reaching there they announce themselves as renowned astrologers. They tell some people of their future and by chance are able to convince them of their knowledge of astrology. A wealthy man named Kalyāṇadāsa comes to know of their 'extraordinary powers'. He takes them to his house where his son Nirmaladāsa is on death bed. He requests them to cure his son. Both Śaṅkara and Mādhavya tell him that they would recite the *Mṛtyuñjaya-mantra* for three months. Kalyāṇadāsa makes all necessary arrangements for it. After three months Nirmaladāsa regains his health and Kalyāṇadāsa gives them ten thousand rupees as *dakṣiṇā*. Both Śaṅkara and Mādhavya return to their native place.

Fifth act — The first thing Śaṅkara asks after returning to his own place is about his wife Śāntā. He is shocked to know that his wife was turned out by the landlord saying that she has no right to get the rent of the steps of the well. The landlord has usurped the whole building. He is also informed that his wife is working as a maidservant and washing the utensils of wealthy people. Śaṅkara goes to the landlord but he abuses him and turns him out of his house. While doing this the landlord hits himself against something and is injured. He files a suit against Śaṅkara saying that he has attacked him and injured him. The judgment of the Magistrate goes against Śaṅkara. As he is going to announce the punishment a voice from the sky announces that justice is wanted in this case. The voice also informs that

it is the wish of Mahātmā Gandhi that all cases hereafter should be referred to Panchayats. In responding to this call the Magistrate hands over the case to the Panchayat. The Panchayat proceeds to investigate the case thoroughly and the Panchas are convinced that the fault lies with the landlord and he should be punished but Śaṅkaradatta forgives him. The landlord is happy at this and returns the house to Śaṅkaradatta. All are glad at this happy consummation.

CHARACTERIZATION

The present play being a social one it is natural that some of the characters in it may represent a typical social evil while others may represent the innocent simple-minded persons, the victims to that evil. They are more types than individuals. Thus Yajñadatta and Śambhudatta represent the evil of the dowry system, the latter also of the Westernization. Similarly the Śreṣṭhin represents the fraud and chicanery rampant in Indian society. Śaṅkaradatta, his wife and daughter represent innocence and goodness and fall victims to the social evils as detailed above.

Śambhudatta — He represents the social group which follows Western culture blindly. Here and there the writer has given us a good satire on the present system of education and the people who have cast off the sacred thread and have got the tuft of hair removed. When Mādhavya who has come to see the bridegroom enquires from him about his education, his father Yajñadatta says :

यज्ञदत्तः — अनेन आंग्लभाषायामन्तिमोपाधिर्गृहीतः, उत्तीर्णश्च पी० सी० एस० परीक्षा-
यामयम् ।

माढव्यः — उपाधिर्गृहीतः, अर्थात् आपद् गृहीता स च आघेः व्याघेश्च गरीयान्, एतस्य
एव फलं यद् शिक्षासूत्रोच्छेदो जातः । यद् विदेशीयैः बलात्कारेण कृतं,
तदार्यैः स्वयं क्रियते । आर्यजातिवृक्षस्य मूलोच्छेद एव । भो यज्ञदत्त, कोयम-
पूर्वः प्रत्याहारः पी० सी० एस० इति । अणादिसूत्रेषु पाणिनिना नायं
पठितः ।।

"Yajñadatta - He has taken the final degree in English. He has also qualified himself for the P.C.S. examination.

Mādhavya — Has obtained the degree - it means has invited trouble and that is worse than the mental agony and the physical disease. It is the result of this that the tuft of hair and the sacred thread have disappeared.

1. p. 7.

Whatever was done by the foreigners by force is being done by the Aryans themselves. This is like the very uprooting of the tree of the Aryan race. O Yajñadatta, what is this new Pratyāhāra - P.C.S. - Pāṇini has not mentioned it in the (Pratyāhāra) *sūtras* beginning with *an*."

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Social problems — The bridegroom and his parents insist on having money though it may reduce the girl's parents to abject poverty. This evil is eating into the vitals of Indian society.

The marriage of Snehalatā is fixed, but on what condition ? Mādhavya's statement discloses this fact :

माढव्यः — विवाहस्तु स्वीकृतः । किन्तु भवता दशसहस्रं दक्षिणा वराय त्वराशकट-
क्रयार्थं प्रदेया स्यात् । एष एव अन्तिमो निर्णयः मया स्वीकृतः । द्रव्यमन्तरेण
विवाहो न स्यात् । न चान्यत्र सम्भवः, सर्वे सर्वत्र सद्रव्यमेव विवाहमम्बन्वं
स्वीकुर्वन्ति । साधारणोऽयं जनेषु रोगः । ¹

"I approve of this marriage but you will have to give rupees ten thousand to enable the bridegroom to purchase a car. This is my final decision. Without money the marriage is not possible. Nor is it possible that it may take place elsewhere. All the people everywhere accept marriage proposals on (the condition of) money only. This is a common disease among the people."

On the one hand the parents of the son are eager to squeeze the money from the parents of the girl while on the other the parents of the girl are worried about their bare existence after their daughter's marriage.

The would-be bridegroom demands rupees ten thousand for purchasing a car. If Śaṅkaradatta is to marry his daughter he cannot do so without selling his house for how can he have rupees ten thousand ? If he does not sell the house his daughter would remain unmarried. He, therefore, is in a very difficult situation. There is trouble for him both ways :

शंकरः — (स्वगतम्) गृहं ददामि तदा क्व निवत्स्यामि, कन्यायाः विवाहं न करोमि तदा
पातकं स्पृशेत्, इति उभयतस्पाशा रज्जुः । ²

"Śaṅkara (to himself) — If I give the house where will I live? If I do not marry the daughter, I will be a sinner. So it is like a rope with a noose

1. Second act, pp. 10-11.

2. Second act, p. 11.

at both ends (out of frying pan into the fire)."

The play is a satire on the twin evil of the dowry system and the wind of Westernization sweeping over the younger generation. It has a good deal of humour the best contribution to which is that of Mādhavya, the common friend of Śaṅkara and Yajñadatta. He is a traditionalist, given to old ways of thought. His simple and innocent remarks in the context of the modern things cannot but excite hearty laughter. Thus when Śambhudatta's father Yajñadatta explains to him the meaning of P.C.S. as Prāntīya-nāgarika-sevā Provincial Civil Service, he immediately comes out :

सेवाधर्मस्तु ब्राह्मणानां न भवति, किमयं तेषां गृहपरिष्कारं पात्रप्रक्षालनं भोजन-
परिपाकं वा करिष्यति ।¹

"To serve is not the job of the Brāhmanas. Will he clean their house or wash their utensils or cook their food?"

Earlier when he and Yajñadatta have had their meals Yajñadatta suggests a stroll in the garden and quotes as an authority a part of the old verse :

भोजनान्ते भ्रमेन्नित्यम्

Mādhavya quotes the other :

यदि शय्या न लभ्यते

Yajñadatta and Mādhavya utter the third and the fourth parts respectively :

शय्यायां जायते रोगः यदि कान्ता न लभ्यते ।

Yajñadatta then says :

प्रेमपुरमिदं नहि भवतो गृहग्रामः

"this is Premapura, not your home village." To this Mādhavya gives a very clever reply :

प्रेमपुरे यदि कान्तालाभो न स्यात्तदा किं विद्वेषिणां पुरे स्यात् ।²

"If no beloved were to be found in Premapura (lovers' city) will she then be found in the enemy's city?"

The author's fine sense of humour is once again displayed when Yajñadatta's marriage is on. His mispronunciation of the Vedic *mantras*

मम व्रते ते हृदयं निदधामि, मम चित्तमनुचित्तं ते अस्तु

as

मम वरते ते हृदयं निजहामि । मम चित्तमनुचित्तं त अस्तु ।³

1. First act, p. 7.

2. First act, pp. 5-6.

3. Third act, p. 15.

is quite amusing. But much more amusing is the expression at the instance of the priest who is frightened at his mispronunciation to moot the idea of the translation of the above *mantra* being repeated in Hindi :

मैं प्रामिस करता हूँ कि तुम्हारी आइडियाज़ के मुताबिक मेरी आइडियाज़ और दिल और दिमाग के मुताबिक हमारा भी हो ।¹

The author feels sad at the fast disappearance of the old cultural values and the Westernism sweeping over the country. The four verses appearing in the fourth act and beginning with

गता भारती भारतीयाऽतिदूरम्

गता वेदविद्या विनाशं प्रकाशम् ²

are a cry of his anguished heart. Rightly does he say :

हा हन्त जितमाङ्गलराजनीतिज्ञैः, हृद्योज्यं हृदः शुष्कतां गतः ।

उत्सन्नप्राय एव भारतदेश आङ्गलदेशीयैः परित्यक्तः ।³

"Alas! the British diplomats have won. This charming tank has dried up. The Britishers left India only when it was almost in ruins."

There can be no more faithful description of the cultural conquest by the West. Though their political domination is over, they still rule us culturally. Their victory is total and complete. The nation has been bled white :

न धौतं नोत्तरीयं च न चैव बलवद् वपुः ।

शक्तिहीना जनाः सर्वे वस्त्रवेष्टितमूर्तयः ॥

न दुग्धं न घृतं चैव न चैव दधिशर्करा ।

कवोष्णचायपानेन प्रातराशकरा नराः ॥⁴

"There is no *dhoti*, no upper garment (*uttariya*), no strong body. All the people wrapped in cloth have no strength in them. There is no milk, no ghee, no sweetened curd. People take lukewarm tea in breakfast."

The author feels sore about the people giving up the old forms of greetings and taking to new ones like handshake etc. His use of the word *pāṇigrahaṇa* for this (handshake) apart from introducing a touch of humour brings out the utter absurdity of the practice :

न प्रणामा न चाशीश्च न च पादाभिवन्दनम् ।

जना जनैश्च कुर्वन्ति पाणिग्रहणमञ्जसा ॥⁵

1. Third act, p. 16.

2. Fourth act, p. 19.

3. Fourth act, p. 20.

4. Fourth act, p. 21.

5. Fourth act, p. 21.

Towards the end of the play the author has a dig at astrology too. Both Śaṅkara and Mādhavya who have absolutely no knowledge of astrology succeed in establishing themselves as experts in the science. They employ the familiar trick and answer *sutotpatti*¹ which is capable of being split up into *suta+utpatti* or *sutā+utpatti* when the question is put to them by the people with regard to the sex of the offspring they are expecting.

The author quotes profusely from old texts, from the Mahābhārata, Manusmṛti, Yājñavalkyasmṛti, Viduranīti etc., and also the Pañcatantra, Hitopadeśa and so on though he not infrequently mentions the source. Sometimes he adopts the variants of the old texts. Thus he says :

आत्मानं सततं गोपायेत् (इति शास्त्रेऽप्युक्तम्)²

The better reading of it found in the Pañcatantra is :

आत्मानं सततं रक्षेत्

which like the one quoted above does not violate the integrity of the metre.

The language is generally free from any serious mistake. An odd form here and there does require some modification. Thus *kintunā*³, the instrumental singular from the indeclinable *kintu*, jars on the ears. Similarly does the use of *māna* in the neuter in *mānañ cāpi hatam*.⁴

The author has introduced here and there a few new words too where- in the influence of Hindi is clearly marked : *manonīta*⁵, *abhibhāvaka*,⁶ *pañcāyatana*⁷ (for Hindi Panchayat), *sārthī*⁸ (for Hindi *sāthī*). *Tvarāśakaṭa*⁹ is a new coinage in the sense of a *car*.

The play has a few good songs modelled on Jayadeva's Gītagovinda.

The first

जय रघुवंशमणौ श्रितसीताकरपङ्कज कृततापसवेश¹⁰

is an imitation of the Gītagovinda :

जय जय देव हरे श्रितकमलाकुचमण्डल घृततापसवेश

1. Fourth act, p. 24.

2. Fourth act, p. 22.

3. First act p. 6.

4. Fifth act, p. 31.

5. First act, p. 6.

6. First act, p. 6.

7. Fifth act, p. 31.

8. Fifth act, p. 31.

9. First act, p. 8.

10. First act, p. 2.

and can be sung like it.

The second

हरिह विलसति सरसवसन्ते¹

is modelled on the Gītagovinda :

हरिह विलसति सरसवसन्ते

and can be sung like it.

Sarjinisaurabham

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Mahidhara Venkatarama Shastri of Andhra, the drama Sarjinisaurabham is modern not only from the point of view of its recent publication but also from its topic and the method of presentation.

PLOT

First act—Gunachandra, a brilliant young man, is the son of a wealthy but miser Adhyapati. Their family priest Devavrata is very much impressed by his good behaviour. He knows that the young man is not like his greedy father and has very generous heart and good habits. Gunachandra has a friend Sudhapurna. Though Gunachandra is the son of a wealthy man still he loves his friend Sudhapurna very sincerely in spite of the fact that the latter belongs to a poor family. Once when both the friends are discussing some thing they hear the cries of people saying that a wild elephant has entered the city and has struck terror all over. It has caught a young girl in its trunk and is going to crush her. Nobody is able to save her. Gunachandra being a brave man cannot restrain himself. He comes forward and saves the girl (Sarjini) from its clutches and kills it. The young girl terrified by this incident falls unconscious. Gunachandra brings her home. When the girl regains consciousness she is surprised to know that the young man has saved her at the risk of his own life. Gunachandra is attracted by the beauty of the young girl. Both fall in love with each other. After exchanging sweet glances and sweet words Sarjini goes to her parents with her maid servant.

Second act—Gunachandra's father Adhyapati is always after money. He is eager to marry his son to a girl whose father agrees to pay him big amounts. Adhyapati is very happy that the marriage of his son would increase his wealth but he does not care whether the girl can prove a good match for his son.

Third act—Gunachandra is lost in the sweet memories of his beloved (Sarjini). He has nothing to talk except his beloved. His friend Sudhapurna is worried because he knows that his (Gunachandra's) father would not allow him to marry Sarjini because she belongs to an ordinary family.

Gunachandra's father sends him a message through Sudhapurna that he should see him immediately. But after some time Adhyapati himself comes to Gunachandra and acquaints him with the whole affair. When Gunachandra comes to know that his father has settled his marriage without even consulting him he feels shocked. He says that he can obey him in all other respects but not in this. After exchanging hot words Gunachandra comes out saying that the marriage arranged by his father cannot take place. He thinks that the dowry system is a big menace to Hindu society and should be totally discarded. His father is adamant and declares that if Gunachandra does not obey him he would disinherit him. Gunachandra is a man of self-respect. He does not care for his father's property and leaves his house. When his mother comes to know about this she secretly gives her son her own share of property.

Fourth act — Shridhara, a wealthy married man, is after Sarojini. He thinks that he can afford to enjoy the company of beautiful Sarojini by marrying her because of immense wealth. He sends a woman messenger to Sarojini's house to convey his desire for marriage. But Sarojini is already in love with Gunachandra, not because he is the son of a wealthy man but because he is a man of guts who saved her from the mad elephant. She rebukes the maid servant who had brought Shridhara's message of marriage and asks her not to show her face again. At the same time she writes a letter to her lover Gunachandra saying that she would think herself very fortunate if he can consider her for marriage. This letter she sends through her friend Bhramarika.

Fifth act — Gunachandra himself is yearning for Sarojini. His answer to the letter is couched in more loving language than the one Sarojini had sent him. He tells her that he would very much like to marry her. Next he comes to a garden where Sarojini, accompanied by one of her girl friends, has come for a stroll. He conceals himself behind the trees. Sarojini on the other hand, unmindful of the presence of Gunachandra in the very garden she is having a stroll, sings a song which gives expression to her lovelorn condition. Gunachandra finds this an ideal opportunity to fling surprise on his sweetheart and makes a sudden appearance. Both the lovers then engage themselves in love talk. Meanwhile a voice from behind the curtain informs that the parents of the lovers have agreed to accept them as man and wife. It is there itself that the happy news of their marriage comes about.

Sixth act — Shridhara is, however, most unhappy at this. He manages Gunachandra to be sent to jail by fabricating a charge against him. He orders his attendants to loot Gunachandra's house and to arrest his wife. Sarojini somehow manages to escape but before she does so, she leaves a letter beneath a rock.

Seventh act — When Sudhapurna comes to know that his friend (Gunachandra) has been arrested on a false charge of theft, he disguises himself as an astrologer and goes to the king. After a short while Shridhara, Gunachandra and Adhyapati (Gunachandra's father) come to the king for his verdict on the case. Sudhapurna who is with the king at that time utilizes the opportunity to impress on him the fact of his being a real astrologer. After this when Sudhapurna tells the king that he knows fully well after reading Gunachandra's face that he has done nothing wrong and Shridhara has levelled a false charge against him, the king believes him. The king not only frees Gunachandra but honours him with the post of a Defence Minister. On the other hand he puts Shridhara to jail for his treacherous behaviour.

Eighth act — Gunachandra does everything assigned to him very faithfully and honestly but is worried about his wife Sarojini. After some time Sarojini's friend Bhramarika comes to see him (Gunachandra) in the guise of a Yoginī (an ascetic woman). She says that she had gone to Sujanapuragrama (where Gunachandra lived earlier with his wife Sarojini) to find out Sarojini but could not get any trace of her. The only thing she could find was a letter Sarojini had left which was addressed to him. Gunachandra reads the letter and after lamenting a lot for Sarojini falls unconscious. The underlying idea of the letter was that if something wrong happens to Gunachandra then it is definite that Sarojini would end her life. Bhramarika helps Gunachandra regain consciousness and consoles him with the words that she would definitely go again in search of Sarojini. At that very moment Gunachandra is informed that a rival king has attacked his country and in spite of the bravery of the Commander-in-chief the king wants that Gunachandra should himself go to the battlefield and control the situation. Gunachandra leaves for battle front instantaneously.

Ninth act — In the beginning of this act the information is broadcast that Gunachandra has controlled the whole situation very successfully and pushed the enemy back. While fighting he is injured badly and falls unconscious. Fortunately, a Hauddukika (an ascetic) comes there to his

rescue. After that the king with his whole family comes to congratulate the wounded hero (Gunachandra). He honours him and says that now he wants to retire and Gunachandra should bear the whole responsibility of his kingdom. At the same time Gunachandra's friend Sudhapurna also comes to congratulate him. Bhramarika who had gone in search of Sarojini once again comes there with the sad news that she could not find her (Sarojini). They all talk about missing Sarojini. Fortunately there appears the same Hauddukika who had treated Gunachandra in the battlefield. Gunachandra invites him and wants to know something about his missing wife. Bhramarika is also eager to know her friend's present whereabouts. Gunachandra while talking to Hauddukika notices remarkable facial similarity with his wife Sarojini. After some discussion the Hauddukika reveals his real self, and there appears Sarojini in all her beauty and charm. Gunachandra is very happy to see his wife who had disguised herself as a Hauddukika to save herself from the clutches of Shridhara. At this happy reunion of Gunachandra and Sarojini, her father Manidasa, her mother and maid servant come there and bless the couple. Gunachandra makes Sudhapurna his minister and arranges his marriage with Bhramarika. In this happy atmosphere all around the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

Gunachandra — Gunachandra is the hero of the play and is endowed with all qualities which go with heroes in Sanskrit plays. First of all he comes before us as a brave young man. He does not indulge in self-praise but his great deeds are the testimony to his greatness. He is out to abolish the caste system. He is very much pained when he sees that a rich man gets more than enough to eat while a poor man cannot even acquire two square meals a day. Says he:

एकः क्षुधातिकृशतां गतमात्मकुक्षिं
संदर्श्य दीनमनसा वृणुते हि पिण्डम् ।
सोद्गारधारमुपभुज्य रसोत्तमान्न-
मेकस्तु हृष्टमनसा तमपाकरोति ॥१॥

"While one pointing to his belly emaciated because of starvation begs for a ball (of rice) another having partaken of dainty dish with continued eructation turns him away arrogantly."

If the son of a wealthy man can think like this, it is really something great.

1. First act, p. 5.

From Gunachandra's point of view if one has wealth, one should be charitable; if one has power one should do one's duty very faithfully. That is why he draws a beautiful picture of an ideal king :

क्वचिदुपचितमर्थं भोगशून्यं नरेशो

जलधिजलमिवार्कः सम्यगाचूष्य युक्त्या ।

सरित इव सुदीर्घाः कल्पयेद् भव्यवृत्तीः

कृतमतिरनुजीवेत्ताः समाश्रित्य लोकः ॥¹

"Somewhere a king without enjoying himself draws well accumulated wealth in a wise manner as the sun the water of the ocean. He should arrange for a decent living (for the people) like the long rivers so that the sensible people may live by them."

Though the son of a millionaire he wants to earn his living himself. He has no patience for a man who is always pleasure-seeking and does not want to work. He calls him a thief. Says he :

गुणचन्द्रः — सत्यमुक्त भवता । तथाप्यात्मवृत्तिः सर्वैरात्मशक्त्यैव निर्वर्तनीयेति तदन्यत्सर्वं
चौर्यमेव भवेदिति च मे मतिः ॥²

Gunachandra — "You are right. Even then every one should earn his own living himself, Anything else I think, is nothing but theft."

To have courage in adversity is the sign of a great man. When nobody offers to rescue the young woman entrapped in the trunk of an elephant and struggling between life and death it is the young Gunachandra only who comes forward to face the danger and rescue the unfortunate girl. Gunachandra is of the opinion that it is only that man who is possessed of courage and fortitude who deserves to be called a human being :

धैर्यमेव कुसुमस्य वृन्तव-

द्वन्धनं हि हृदयस्य सङ्कटे ।

विश्लथं भवति यस्य स स्वक-

च्छायायाऽपि मरुतेव पात्यते ॥³

"As the stem supports the flower so when calamity comes, it is only courage which supports the heart. When this bond (of courage) loosens then (the man) is felled by his own shadow as if (tossed) by wind."

Putting her on his shoulders Gunachandra brings the unconscious lady

1. First act, p. 6.

2. First act, p. 8.

3. First act, p. 9.

to his home. But when after treatment she regains consciousness he thinks it improper even to touch her. Though he loves the charming young lady thinking that she is a *Parakīyā* he does not transgress the limits of propriety. The following words bring out the true nobility of his character :

कृतार्था वयं यत इयं प्राणान्वहति । इतः परं नार्हामि परवतीमेनां स्पृष्टुम् ?¹

"Our purpose is served because she is alive. But from now on I cannot touch her who belongs to someone else."

How life-like is the description by Sarojini of her rescuer :

रूपे गम्भीरत्वं

नादे धीरत्वमात्मगुणवत्त्वम् ।

मनसि च दयार्द्रता का

तरुणी प्राणेशमेनमुपयाति ॥²

"There is sobriety in his form; firmness and virtuousness in his voice; generosity in his mind. What young lady would win this young man for her husband ?"

Gunachandra's father wants to marry his son forcibly to a girl whose father can give him (*Adhyapati*) the desired sum of money. But Gunachandra does not like this. His point of view is that the basis of union between man and woman should be love and not money :

प्राभवं संपदो नैव कारणं प्रेमसङ्गतेः ।

सर्वानतीत्य वध्नाति स्त्रीपुंसौ हृदयं समम् ।³

"Abundance of wealth is not the cause of union in love. It is the heart that unites man and woman leaving everything aside."

Gunachandra has a unique physique. The writer describes his physical beauty through the mouth of Sarojini

नासायां भुजमूर्ध्नि भावनिवहे चोच्चैस्स्थितिर्मर्दवं

हस्तौष्ठांघ्रितले तथा मनसि फालोरस्थले विस्तृता ।

दैर्घ्यं पीवरबाहुदण्डयुगले चालोचने लोचने

मुक्तासारविजृम्भणं स्मितकलाप्रादुर्भवे प्राभवे ।⁴

"Gunachandra's ideas, nose and shoulders are elevated. His hands, lips and soles of feet are soft. His mind and plough-share-like chest are expansive. His plump strong arms and radiant eyes are long. His imp-

1. First act, p. 11.

2. First act, p. 16.

3. Third act, p. 43.

4. Fourth act, p. 47.

ressive art of smile has a sheen of best of pearls."

Gunachandra is hard as flint and soft as flower. He stands like a rock before the wild animal but bends low with respect and softness before his beautiful wife. Says he :

प्रेयसीभुजलतानियन्त्रितः को युवा भुवि न नम्रतामियात् ।¹

"What young man on this earth, who when chained by the creeper-like arms of his beloved would not bend?" By these words he (Gunachandra) shows his utmost love for Sarojini. The man who is undaunted even in the face of unforeseen calamities loses all his courage when separated from his beloved. The only thing to which this is due is his great love for his beloved Sarojini. When Gunachandra is offered the post of Defence Minister, he gets everything he could have hoped for but still he is not happy because his beloved Sarojini is not with him. When he gets Sarojini's letter through Bhramarika and suspects that Sarojini might have committed suicide he falls unconscious. Bhramarika describes his pathetic condition in the following words :

नाम्बिरेतु विलयं वडवान्ने-
नद्विरेतु पतनं पविघातात् ।
चित्तवांस्तु क इवात्र न मुह्येत्
प्रेमसंभृतकलत्रवियोगात् ? ॥²

"It is just possible that the ocean may not get dry by the submarine fire. It is also possible that the mountain may not fall, struck by the thunderbolt but what sentient being may not get confounded on account of the separation from beloved wife."

The greatness of Gunachandra lies in the fact that though the son of a wealthy man he is not proud. When in adverse circumstances he has nothing left with him he does not lose courage and when he is made the ruler of the whole country he does not lose his head. Even when he is enthroned he keeps before him the true perspective and declares :

राज्येऽस्मिन्नवबूय दर्पमथवा संकोचमप्यान्तरं
तस्याम्युन्नतिमाकलय्य नितरां यो वा जनोऽङ्गीकृतम् ।
स्वीयं कर्म समापयत्यहरहर्धन्यः स एवात्मवा-
नेवं चेन्मलपूरसावयममात्यो वेति भेदो न मे ॥³

1. Sixth act, p. 76.
2. Eighth act, p. 105.
3. Ninth act, p. 112.

"In this kingdom, he is really fortunate who discarding pride, hesitation and being self-restrained does his task assigned to him everyday keeping in view the good of the country. In that state to me there would be no distinction between a minister and a sweeper."

Gunachandra is a kind-hearted person. In a moment of self-examination he says about himself :

सम्पत्तिदानं नहि मुख्यमस्ति
न श्रान्तिदानं न च भूमिदानम् ।
दीनस्य लोकस्य सुखाप्तिहेतुः
प्रेमैकदानं नृवरेषु भूयात् ॥¹

"To give wealth, to give one's labour and to give land are not superior gifts. May the only gift of love, the cause of happiness of the miserable people, be present in the good people."

Sarojini—An ideal personification of Indian womanhood, who never cares for wealth but sacrifices everything for love, and who is very loyal to her husband is Sarojini, the heroine of this play. Sarojini's sacrifice is much bigger than that of Gunachandra. Sarojini experiences pangs of separation more acutely than Gunachandra. She occupies in the play a place more important than Gunachandra. The writer himself seems to believe in this because he has named his play after the heroine instead of the hero.

A man named Shridhara is after Sarojini. He wants to sacrifice all his wealth if only he could manage to get her. He even declares that he may divorce his first wife if Sarojini agrees but all his temptations cannot wean Sarojini away from her lover even for a moment. In her mind she has taken Gunachandra as her husband and now come what may she would not change her mind. Says she :

विशुद्धप्रेमयुक्तानां स्त्रीणां हृदयतन्तुषु ।
कालुष्यभावसंसर्गो न स्थानं लभते क्वचित् ॥²

"Impure thought cannot touch the chords of the hearts of women who are full of pure love."

If one has pure love in one's heart then there is no need for other sophistications. Sarojini loves Gunachandra. This is enough for her. That is why she says :

1. Ninth act, p. 122.
2. Fourth act, p. 50.

पुं सामुल्लसतां वधूजनसमावेशे हठात्संभवे-
 दीदृत्यं श्रयते हसो समरसीभावाय हावादिकम् ।
 सोहादे जनिते परस्परपरीनोषाय भूषादिकं
 नानन्दामृतपानतृप्तहृदयैः साडम्बरं काङ्क्ष्यते ॥¹

"When the young men are jovial and are united with brides, they perforce misbehave themselves. The brides too, to be emotionalized make amorous gestures. With their hearts satiated with the nectar of felicity they no longer desire vociferously for each other's satisfaction ornaments and the like."

Sarojini knows how to express her feelings. She never likes to keep anything secret from him whom she loves. She loves Gunachandra and without hesitation she requests him to accept the proposal :

दाता प्राणानिलस्य प्रभुगुणसुरभिः कन्यकानां वरार्ह-
 शिक्तो माधुर्यधुर्यस्त्वमिति मम मनः सञ्जितं त्वय्यतीव ।
 कारुण्यं चेत्तवास्यां सहवसतिमुदं देहि तुल्यप्रपत्त्या
 प्रीतिश्चेदत्र न स्यात्प्रियगुण कुरु मां किङ्करीं त्वत्सकाशे ॥²

"You are the giver of life, redolent of the virtues of the master, a fit choice for girls. You are sweet in your heart. My heart is deeply attached to you. If you have any mercy on me then give me the pleasure of your company as I seek protection of you worthy of it. O lover of qualities, if you do not love me (as I love you) then keep me with you as your maid-servant."

When Gunachandra knows her feelings, he is very much pleased and they both are married. But they cannot enjoy marriage for long. Shridhara lays a big conspiracy against Gunachandra as a result of which Gunachandra is put into jail. Sarojini too wants to join her husband there. Her words that "I will also follow my husband" are a good testimony to her deep attachment to her husband. When a man named Durdanta advises her to stay at home she angrily answers :

भर्ता यदि स्याद्विमनास्तदास्य
 सधर्मिणी शोकहतान्तरात्मा ।
 तथा हि दीपो धृतकज्जलश्चेत्
 शिखापि तस्य प्रविलुप्तशोभा ॥³

1. Fourth act, p. 58

2. Fourth act, p. 59.

3. Sixth act, p. 82.

"If the husband is worried then the wife too (automatically) is depressed just as an earthen lamp which, when it holds soot, has the beauty of its flame too lost."

She wants nothing else in this world except to be with her husband. Shridhara has everything which can give her material happiness. Gunachandra however is just a penniless man but Sarojini prefers Gunachandra to Shridhara for she loves him.

When Shridhara's agents come and torture her, she says proudly :

म्रियेत वा जीवतु वा सरोजिनी
कुलाङ्गनेयं कुलटा कथं भवेत् ?
चिरं हि यन्त्रेण निपीडिताऽपि सा
जहाति माधुर्यगुणं न गोस्तनी ॥¹

"Sarojini may die or live but she cannot become an unchaste woman because she belongs to a noble family. Even when crushed by a machine for long the grapes would not give up their sweetness."

A chaste wife wants the company of her husband even after death. That is what Sarojini says :

नाथस्य संयोगमुपैमि नो वा
तस्मै सदा सौख्यमुमा ददातु ।
जन्मान्तरेऽप्येष गुणाभिमानी
पतिर्भवेत्प्राणपतिर्यतोऽसौ ॥²

"(In this life) it is possible that I may have union with my husband or not but I pray (Mother) Umā to give (my husband) happiness always and help me get him, who is proud of his qualities, as my husband in my next life too, for he is the lord of my life."

Other characters like Sudhapurna, Bhramarika, Adhyapati and Shridhara play their part very well. They are ordinary characters and do not deserve any detailed treatment.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The main sentiment of the play is erotic but the heroic also plays an important part. Hero Gunachandra bravely saves Sarojini, the heroine, from the clutches of an elephant but at the same time he chains himself with the bond of love, so much so that when his father wants to marry him

1. Sixth act, p. 85.

2. Ibid.

with the girl whose father agrees to pay the desired amount he straightaway refuses that proposal and marries Sarojini. He is deprived of his father's property by marrying Sarojini but he never cares for it.

The writer has not introduced Vidūṣaka in the play.

The absence of Prakrit also is a departure from the old established practice. All the characters of the drama speak Sanskrit only.

The writer is very fond of Sanskrit language and he does not like to mix any dialect with it. When the stage manager says that it is possible that the drama played through the medium of Sanskrit may not please the audience the actress answers :

या पीयूषनिभं रसं रुचिवंशादापाय्य तृप्तिं व्यधात्

दत्त्वा पाण्यवलम्बमग्रपदसञ्चारं स्वमाबोधयत् ।

भावान्भव्यगुणान् हितानचकथद् गैर्वाणवाणीमिमं

स्वां घात्रीमिव भक्तियुक्तिकलितो विस्मर्तुमीहेत कः ॥¹

"What man of sense and devotion would like to forget Sanskrit which like his foster mother after making him drink to the full the nectar-like pleasure has given satiation, supporting him by the hand has taught him to walk tiptoe and has inspired him with happy and beneficial thought."

Alliterations and similes are the writer's favourite figures of speech. An exquisite example of alliteration is :

नटद्विहङ्गस्तटिनीतरङ्गः

प्रमत्ताभृङ्गः सुमजालसङ्गः ।

स्त्रीणामपाङ्गोऽयमनङ्गरङ्गः

फुल्लान्तरङ्गः सुरभिप्रसङ्गः ।²

"As the spring sets in, the mind becomes full of joy. The birds dance with the waves of the river. The bees become intoxicated due to their contact with flowers. The side-glances of the young girls become the stage for Cupid."

Among the examples of simile one which is particularly delightful is given below :

सहृदयहृदये निहितं

निगुणमपि गुण्यमेव कविवचनम् ।

1. First act, p. 2.

2. First act, p. 3.

विरसमपि मधुनि भावित-

मामलकं हृद्यमेव भवति फलम् ॥¹

"Even if devoid of any quality a poet's word surely becomes possessed of it when it finds a place in the heart of a susceptible person. Even emblic myrobalan though tasteless becomes tasteful when mixed with honey."

Sometimes the learned writer writes such verses as indicate his philosophical attitude towards life. Here is an example :

कामादयः पञ्च भावा वार्धक्यं यान्ति कालतः ।

अन्तकालेऽपि लोभस्तु तारुण्यं प्रतिपद्यते ॥²

"Passion etc. (passion, anger, greediness, ignorance and haughtiness) are the five qualities which decay with the passage of time; greed alone becomes young even in the last days."

Witty sayings lend charm to this play. Adhyapati who knows nothing except wealth says :

या मा सा मायेति हि

माशब्दस्यासदर्थमभिधत्ते ।

तदयुक्तं तस्यार्थो

लक्ष्मीरित्येव निश्चितो भवति ॥³

"That which does not exist—with this interpretation the word *māyā* gives the sense of non-existent. Now this is not right; it decidedly means Lakṣmī only."

The writer is expert in describing the beauty of nature :

पुष्पगुच्छविनम्रमस्तकां

मन्दमारुतविकम्पिता लताः ।

अङ्गमङ्गिमविलासभासुरा

मोहनाङ्ग्य इव लान्ति मानसम् ॥⁴

The creepers when shaken by the gentle breeze captivate the heart like charming ladies when they have their fore parts (foreheads) bent under the (weight of the) bunches of flowers and when they shine with the playfulness in the twisting of their parts (limbs)."

1. First act, p. 3.

2. Second act, p. 20.

3. Second act, p. 21.

4. Sixth act, p. 75.

There is much similarity between the natural phenomena and the human beings. The learned scholar shows this similarity in the following words :

चूतं पल्लवितं स्वमेव कलयन्कूजत्यहो कोकिलो
वल्लीं पुष्पवतीं तथा मधुमतीं भृङ्गोऽभितो भ्राम्यति ।
तारुण्यं नवमञ्जरीव सुभगं सौन्दर्यलीलाञ्छितं
नारीणामवलोकयन्नवयुवा किं वा न वा गायति ॥¹

"Lo ! the cuckoo thinks that the blossoming mango tree belongs to it alone and coos, similarly does the bee hover over a creeper full of flowers and honey. What song would a youth not sing when he beholds the graceful and the charming youth of the ladies as lovely as a fresh spray."

The writer has used simple but idiomatic language. However at places vernacular influence can easily be discerned :

रहःस्थिताभ्यामावाभ्यां सर्वमपि श्रुतम् । नह्येतादृशे जने मनो लगति ॥²

In Hindi we would say :

ऐसे व्यक्ति के साथ मन नहीं लगता ।

"We have heard everything unnoticed. The mind has no liking for such a person."

Some Modern Problems : The Dowry System — The author has introduced some new problems in his drama. For instance, in these days, the problem of dowry has assumed a menacing proportion. The learned writer traces the history of the dowry system and finds that in earlier days the system of dowry never existed in this form. That is why he says :

देशे यत्र तपोवना इति जनाः पूर्वे प्रथमार्जय—
न्नेवं मानयशोवना इति च निर्वर्त्याद्भुतं कर्म यत् ।
त्यक्त्वाऽत्रैव मनःसमुन्नतिमिमे ते भारतीयाः कथं
जाताः शुल्कवना इति ह्रियमुपेत्याहो ! मनो दूयते ॥³

"In earlier days the people of this country became famous for their wealth of penance and self-respect by their wonderful exploits, Now these very Indians, O wonder, have given up here (in this life) itself that loftiness of the mind and have come to prize the (sordid) fee. Seeing this I feel ashamed and distressed !"

1. Third act, p. 32.
2. Fourth act, p. 58.
3. Third act, p. 35.

The middle class families are groaning under the weight of the tragic system. If one is lucky enough to have immense wealth and has only one daughter, he can show off his wealth and procure a good husband for his daughter, but what about a man who has got many daughters and has not got enough wealth to fill the big pockets of the greedy bridegrooms. Shri Parvata who is able to obtain Adhyapati's son for his daughter by striking a big bargain is distressed in his heart and says :

सर्वं खल्वपि वित्तमर्जितमहो ! पित्रेऽस्य शुल्कात्मना
दत्त्वा योग्यवरोऽद्य लब्ध इति मे चित्तं चिरान्निवृत्तम् ।
एवं श्राम्यति चेन्मनो मम तदाप्तावेककन्यापितुः
प्रोत्ताम्यन्ति कथं नु तद्बहुलताभारेऽन्यसंसारिणः ॥¹

"I am happy that I have got at long last a suitable match for my daughter after giving away all my earnings to the father of the groom as fee. If I, the father of one daughter, am so much mentally fatigued, how much more are the others in this world."

Today, we find that a girl is considered merely a lifeless thing and nothing more than that. Her father can give her to anybody whom he considers fit. She has no say in the matter. On the other hand a boy has his price. If moderately educated, he may demand moderate amount but if highly educated and qualified the price goes up. The price goes up proportionately with the education and the status of the family. Adhyapati demands a high fee for his son :

आद्यपतिः—अयि! अभिलषितं वरशुल्कं यदि दीयते तदा सर्वमप्यभिमतं सिध्येत्, धनसाध्यं
खल्विदं जगत् ॥²

"Adhyapati—Gentleman, if you give us desired marriage fee then all that you desire may be achieved, for this world is manageable with money (alone)."

On being asked by Sripurvata (the girl's father) as to how much fee he would have for his son, Adhyapati says proudly :

गुणचन्द्रः कलापूर्णः स्वर्णपूर्णश्च कोष्ठकाः ।
येन मे हृदयं पूर्णं भवेत् दातुमर्हसि ॥³

"My son Gunachandra is skilled in arts. My cellars are full of gold.

1. Second act, p. 27.
2. Second act, p. 24.
3. Second act, p. 25.

You should give me what may make my heart contented."

While purchasing a thing the customer and shopkeeper indulge in bargaining. Likewise Adhyapati and Sriparvata bargain for Gunachandra. Sriparvata says that he is demanding too much. At this Adhyapati says bluntly :

भवतो मुखं दृष्ट्वा प्रथममेव मया सङ्ख्यायामल्पीयसी मात्रा प्रदर्शिता । यद्यङ्गीकारः
स्यात्तर्हि प्रवृत्तिः क्रियताम् । नोचेद्यथागतं निवृत्तिरेव शरणमाश्रीयताम् ॥¹

"Seeing your face I have already quoted less amount. If you agree to this, then proceed, otherwise go back the way you came."

Polygamy—Another problem which is very much connected with dowry is polygamy. A wealthy man can have more than one wife for his pleasure. Shridhara is a wealthy man and he wants to buy beautiful Sarojini to satisfy his lust. The whole society is demoralized by this practice. The writer here poses a question : Is the girl only a plaything in the hands of a man whom he can buy at his sweet will ? Sarojini by refusing his proposal shows extraordinary courage.

Village Uplift—The educated young man of India is indifferent towards agriculture. The writer here suggests that if the young man of today develops liking for agriculture India can regain her lost prosperity. Gunachandra, the hero of the play, is an expert in agriculture. He knows the secret of the earth and also how to cultivate it. That is why when he is deprived of his father's wealth he depends upon his agricultural skill for making fortune out of it. Pātalikā (Gardenkeeper's wife) seeing his skill remarks :

आम्नातक ! यद्येवं देशे सर्वत्र कृषिकर्मण्यनलसता स्याज्जनस्य तर्हि फलपुष्पादीनां क्षीर-
समृद्धेश्च न कुत्रापि ह्रासः संभवेत् ॥²

"Amrataka ! if like him everyone should become active in agriculture then there would be no shortage of flowers, fruits, milk and other things."

Bhramarika, Sarojini's friend, goes to deliver her friend's letter to Gunachandra. She is charmed with the beauty of his garden which she describes to Sarojini in the following words :

रोदोगह्वरतुल्यकूपसलिलैर्यन्त्रोत्थितैर्वधितै-
नरिरीकेरमहीरुहैः फलभरादाभुग्नमस्ताञ्चितैः ।
व्यामग्राह्यशलादुहेमपनसैश्चित्रै रसालद्रुमै-
रारामो मधुकैतकीपनसरम्भाद्यैश्च रम्यो महान् ॥³

1. Second act, p. 25.

2. Fifth act, p. 60.

3. Fifth act, p. 63.

"The garden is highly charming with its variety of mango, cocoanut, sweet ketaka, panasa, plantain and other trees which have been caused to grow by the waters drawn by the Persian wheels from the wells resembling in their depth the hollow between the sky and the earth, as also the rare golden panasas with the height of the Vyāma measure."

Proper attention to agriculture will automatically lead to the prosperity of villages.

Lure for money—Besides, the author has drawn our attention to modern trends viz., people's lure for money and nothing else. They can sacrifice even their honour and prestige for acquiring money. They may break their relations with their kith and kin but cannot sacrifice their wealth. That is why the writer says :

वीणानादो मोहनो नैव नादो
नैवाह्लादी कामिनीकण्ठनादः ।
सर्वोत्कर्षी रूप्यकस्यैव नादो
मुग्धो बालोऽप्यत्र यन्मोहमेति ॥¹

'The notes of Vīṇā are not so attractive, the voice of a loving damsel is also not pleasing, only the jingling of rupees excels every other sound because even an innocent child is attracted by it.'

When society is so much money-minded then there arises another big vice (corruption) and that is bribery. The man who gives so much importance to money may want its price whenever he does anything for another person. The system of bribery has touched a new high these days. Gunachandra's friend Sudhapurna says :

न विद्वत्ता न वा शौर्यं न रूपं न शुचिर्मतिः ।
कार्यनिर्वहणे दक्षा राजद्वारि घनं विना ॥²

"In the royal court, learning, valour, beauty and pure mind are not competent to accomplish an end without money."

Mother's love — Lastly mention may be made of the mother's selfless and pure love for her children. In spite of selfishness all over the world the mother's love is always selfless. When Gunachandra's father disowns his son, it is his mother only who supports him with her own personal property. Overjoyed by mother's selfless love Gunachandra says :

1. Fourth act, p. 49.
2. Seventh act, p. 89.

ज्ञाते कुक्षिमुपागते सुमुखता मोदो मनाक्स्पन्दिते
जाते जन्मकृतार्थता परवशीभावो गिरामुद्गमे ।
प्राणा एव पणो विपत्सु समताऽभावो हि रूपादिषु
ज्यायस्त्वेषि शिशुत्वभावनमहो ! मातुस्सुते स्निग्धता ॥¹

"Oh ! How much love mother has for her child. With the child in her womb she becomes cheerful. When there is a little movement in it she feels happy. When born she thinks the aim of her life is fulfilled. When the child begins to lisp she feels beside herself with joy. When (her child) is in distress she stakes her very life. She thinks that in the matter of beauty her child is peerless. Even though he may be grown up she looks upon it as a child."

1. Third act, p. 41.

Markaṭamārdalikah

INTRODUCTORY

The one act play Markaṭamārdalikah styled as Bhāṇa by the author Y. Mahalinga Sastri is published in the Mañjūṣā, the now defunct Sanskrit monthly of Calcutta, in 1951.

PLOT

In the prologue the stage manager appears on the stage and informs the audience of the condition of a monkey groaning under pain. "Unable to stand its groans I would leave this place", says he.

The monkey then appears on the stage. It is dying with pain because of a thorn in its tail. It acts noticing a barber in front of it. It requests him politely to take out the thorn from its tail. It even promises to reward him suitably. The barber takes out the thorn but while he is doing so the monkey jumps up and cuts a fringe of its tail. This infuriates it (the monkey). It gives the barber a bit of its mind and leaves the place with his razor. Being afraid of the monkey the barber forgets about the razor and takes to heels.

As the monkey goes some distance it makes a show of noticing an old woman making a basket with a bamboo tearing it with her nails in the absence of a knife. The monkey goes to her; addresses her as mother and gives her the razor that it has with it to facilitate her work. The old woman is very happy at this and sets about making the basket with the razor. The bamboo being hard the razor breaks. The monkey upset at this abuses the old woman. It demands the basket as a compensation for the razor. The old woman has no option but to part with (the basket) for she is afraid of the monkey. Happy with the basket the monkey flits about. It then makes a show of listening to a sound as if somebody were calling it. But nobody actually calls it. A person is yelling for his bullocks. He has no basket. He is feeding them with wild grass and cotton by spreading them on a mat. The monkey approaches him and offers him basket for feeding the animals. The man readily accepts the offer. In the meantime the bullocks fight and break the basket. The monkey flies into rage, condemns the man in the strongest terms and threatens to break his hands and feet. He demands the

bullocks as a compensation for the loss of the basket. Terrified the man parts with the bullocks and makes good his escape. The monkey happy at its gain proceeds on. After a distance it makes a show of noticing a man who is himself yoked to an oil presser in the absence of the bullocks. The monkey makes an offer of its bullocks to him which he gratefully accepts. Hardly is he able to extract a pitcherful of it the monkey asks for the return of its bullocks. The man pleads with it to allow them with him for some more time ; he has to extract some thirteen pitcherfuls of oil. The monkey does not agree. Instead it is cross with him. He leaves the bullocks behind but takes away the oil pitcher to be handed over to an old woman in a hut whom it meets after it covers a distance. The old woman was unable to cook the cakes (*apūpas*) in the absence of oil. With the oil given by the monkey the old woman cooks the cakes but does not allow it (the monkey) to partake of them on the plea of their having been prepared for sale. The infuriated monkey drives away the old woman and helps itself with quite a few cakes. It also distributes a large number of them free among the customers. In the meantime a group of musicians turns up there and makes a short shrift of the remaining cakes. Not a single cake is now left for the monkey which infuriates it with the result that it hurls abuses at musicians and sends them away. In a flurry they leave their Mardala (a drum-like musical instrument) behind. The monkey takes hold of it, climbs a tree, plays on it. With the sound of the Mardala other monkeys also gather there. The monkey tells them that it had come into contact with humans and with the chopping off of the tail had become a human being. He further tells them as to how he had come to acquire a razor, a basket for a razor, a pair of bullocks for a basket, a pitcherful of oil for bullocks, the cakes for oil and finally Mardala for the cakes. The monkeys gathered there are very happy to know of its exploits. They speak highly of it and accept it as their leader. And with this the play comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

In line with the requirements of a Bhāṇa, the play has only one character, the monkey, who represents those people in society who by assuming different forms at different places delude innocent people. They tempt them with something but snatch away some other thing. They are not philanthropists in essence. Even when they part with a thing they part with it with reservation. They are soft and polite in the beginning but are

discourteous and harsh later when they find that the thing they had parted with is being harmed. The sense of ownership even when they have parted with a thing, seemingly of their own free will, persists. Newer and newer things are therefore acquired in this way and the people cheated of their belongings. The people around them are carried away by their talk. They take their nefarious activities as their exploits and in their naivette lionize them.

Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ

INTRODUCTORY

Written by Y. Mahalinga Sastri the one act play Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ is published in the Sanskrit journal of the Sahitya Akademi, the Samskrita Pratibhā, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1963.

PLOT

In the city of Sāketa Chandovatī, a neighbour of Śatahradā, the sharp-tongued lady comes to her house to congratulate her on her being blessed with a grandson. Śatahradā has a married daughter Sandīpanī. She is equally cruel and sharp-tongued. She has come to spend some days with her mother. She scolds her little daughter for accepting the sweets which her auntie Cārumatī, the wife of Śatahradā's son Cārucandra, has brought from her parents' house. Śatahradā utters harsh words for Chandovatī saying that she has not cared for her daughter Sandīpanī and her son-in-law who have come only to spend a few days with her but is eager to have a look at her grandson and her daughter-in-law. Pained by her rough treatment Chandovatī does not enter the inner apartment and goes away. Śatahradā and her daughter Sandīpanī condemn Cārumatī for entangling Cārucandra. Śarvarīśa, the husband of Śatahradā, is ailing. He is a good-natured man and fully understands his harsh wife. He is favourably inclined towards his daughter-in-law Cārumatī, who is tortured both by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. A Vaidya comes to see him, prescribes a medicine for him which is to be prepared with boiling water. He sends his grand daughter Śaśikalā to his daughter-in-law Cārumatī with a message to prepare the medicine. Śatahradā and Sandīpanī busy condemning Cārumatī do not notice the coming and going of the Vaidya. Śatahradā openly praises her daughter's beauty and condemns the features and figure of Cārumatī. As they are discussing and criticizing Cārumatī, she comes with Śaśikalā carrying the medicated water. Śatahradā condemns her saying that only she can take care of her father-in-law and his wife and daughter are not able to look after him. Cārumatī is pained by these words. She places the pot with boiling water on the ground and goes away saying that she has no control over her tongue. Śatahradā is furious at this. She cries out that her daughter-

in-law has insulted her badly, and now she has no place in the house. Sandīpanī (Śatahradā's daughter) suspects that Cārumatī might have mixed poison in the water. She therefore wants to test the water herself. When she takes the medicated water to her father, he just does not like it and throws it away saying that it is not fit for a sick man. This enrages Śatahradā and she says that he likes the medicine only if it is given by his daughter-in-law. 'Both father-in-law and daughter-in-law are one, that her husband does not care for his wife and daughter and that he wants to get rid of both of them' says she. Śarvarīśa on his part condemns them saying that both of them have no time to look after anybody. They can only either quarrel or rebuke others. He is waiting for his son Cārucandra who has gone out with his in-laws to listen to the story of the Rāmāyaṇa. Śatahradā condemns her son Cārucandra because he has gone out with his in-laws while his father is ill.

While they are exchanging harsh words, they hear the cries of Śaśikalā who is frightened by the two fighting cats in the kitchen. Śatahradā rushes to the kitchen fearing the spilling of the curd etc. by the cats. Śarvarīśa lies down pondering over the harsh words and rough treatment of his wife. Meanwhile Cārucandra returns and asks his father as to how he is feeling now. Śarvarīśa tells him (Cārucandra) that he is not as much sick physically as he is mentally because Śatahradā has treated Cārumatī very harshly. Meanwhile Śaśikalā reports that Cārumatī has gone somewhere after hearing the harsh words from her grandmother. Cārucandra relates to his father the whole incident of Kaikeyī in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa where she begs for Rāma's banishment from Ayodhyā for fourteen years. He further says that his family is undergoing the same crisis as was created by Kaikeyī for Rāma, the only difference being that at that time it was a step mother who had illtreated a step son while this time it is the real mother who is illtreating her own son (himself).

While they are happily engaged in the talk they hear the heartrending cries of Bandhumatī, the grandmother of Cārumatī. She comes carrying in her arms the fainted Cārumatī who had tried to commit suicide by hanging herself from a tree. Śatahradā and Sandīpanī are still indifferent and are only worried that every body should know that she has hanged herself on her own and nobody else is responsible for it. Cārucandra rushes to call a Vaidya. After much effort she responds to the treatment and regains consciousness. Śarvarīśa pledges that the first thing that he is

going to do is to settle both his son and daughter-in-law in a separate house. The drama ends with the words of Cārucandra where he says that parents should see to it that newly-wedded sons are settled in separate houses.

CHARACTERIZATION

Śatahradā—She is the wife of Śarvarīśa, a householder in Śāketa. A harsh lady, she always speaks ill of everybody. She does not like her neighbour because she has come only to see her newly born grandson. She hates her daughter-in-law Cārumatī because she has entangled her son Cārucandra. She condemns Śarvarīśa because he is kind towards Cārumatī. She does not spare even Cārucandra and condemns him for coming late and going with his in-laws.

She has some soft corner only for her daughter Sandīpanī whom she praises and admires. Even when Cārumatī is struggling for life, she is not at all perturbed and says—

शतह्रदा—कुतः संभ्रमः ? इदानीं स्वस्थैव भविष्यति यदि यूयं मुवा प्रक्षोभं परिहरिष्यथ ।

"Śatahradā : Why this flurry ? She will be allright now if only you were to give up unnecessary excitement."

Sandīpanī—She is a true replica of her mother. She is a heartless lady. She curses her daughter Śaśikalā just because she has accepted sweets from her auntie Cārumatī. It is amusing to look at her but horrible to listen to her :

(ततः प्रविगति विश्लथपरिधाना विलुलितमूर्धजा अश्रुपूणक्षी रूक्षदर्शना सक्रोधामर्षा । (दन्तान् कटकटाकृत्य)

सन्दीपनी—क्षुद्रे ! प्रणश्य, मृत्युं व्रज । चितानिवेशिता भव । जनमारिणी त्वां ग्रसताम् । अवटे त्वां प्रक्षिप्य मृदनामि । गोमयं भक्षय अमुं क्षीरिणीपिण्डं रोचयमाना अपहस्तितमाना ।

"Then enters (*Sandīpanī*) angry and wrathful with loose dress dishevelled hair, tearful eyes, unpolished look (gnawing at the teeth).

Sandīpanī—O you mean one, be destroyed, go to death, fall in pyre, may epidemic swallow you. Let me throw you into a pit and crush you. Partake of coudung in that you giving up self-respect have a liking for that lump of Kṣīrīṇī."

She openly criticizes her sister-in-law. When Cārumatī brings medicated water for her father-in-law it is Sandīpanī who is suspicious and says :

सन्दीपनी — (पानीयभाजनं सप्रयत्नं पश्यन्ती) इदमत्र किमप्याविलमिव । इदं तावत् प्रथमं परीक्षणीयम् । इदानीमेव निर्भेदः कर्तव्यः । दर्शयामि तातस्य ।

"Sandīpanī: (*Looking at the vessel of water minutely*) Here is something dark over here. This may first be examined. This very moment the disclosure is to be made. I show it to father."

When fed up with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law Cārumatī tries to commit suicide Sandīpanī is only concerned with her own safety and says : सन्दीपनी— अस्त्येतत् । किंतु स्वच्छन्देनेदृशं कृतमपि परेषां मूर्ध्नि खत्वायतते ।¹

"Sandīpanī : This is it. Even if one were to have done it at one's own free will, it would come on the heads of others."

Cārumatī—She is an obedient daughter-in-law. Her father-in-law has faith in her. That is why he sends Śaśikalā to Cārumatī for preparing the medicine. But she is simply unable to please her harsh mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Though tortured by them she has self respect. She cannot bear the false blame levied on her. That is why she says :

चारुमती — यद्यसम्मतं वो यथा तथा वा कुरुष्वम् । मा भूरि, अस्ति निरवग्रहा जिह्वे-
ति निर्मयादिं दुर्वचःकथाः प्रयन्ताम् ।²

"Cārumatī : If you do not agree you do as you please. Don't you however weave lots of patched garments of bad words setting aside all norms simply because the tongue is unrestrained."

Though she has recently delivered a boy and is not feeling well she has to do all the household work. When the torture becomes unbearable only then does she take the drastic step of committing suicide. Fortunately she is saved by the timely help of her grandmother, Cārucandra and her uncle. Śarvarīśa — He is an old man ailing both physically and mentally. His only hopes are his good and obedient son Cārucandra and his daughter-in-law Cārumatī. He knows everything that goes on in his house, and also knows as to who is at fault. He is quite unhappy with his wife and daughter whom he taunts when he finds them blissfully ignorant of the coming and the going of the physician who had come to examine him and had prescribed a medicine for him :

शर्वरीशः—मिषजि उपस्थितेऽन्तर्गृहे महान् कोलाहलोऽवर्तत । अतिगुरुकृत्याकुलया भवत्या
मिषगागमचनिर्गमनादिकमपि न पारितं लक्षयितुम् ।³

"Śarvarīśa — As the physician approached there was a great noise inside the house. Busy in the important duties you could not notice even the

1. Ayodhyakāṇḍaḥ, p. 50.

2. Ibid., p. 39

3. Ibid., p. 41.

entry and the exit etc. of the physician."

Faced with the perpetual quarrels of his wife and daughter in-law he decides to settle his son and daughter-in-law in a separate house.

Cārucandra — He is an obedient son. He loves his father and relates to him the Rāmāyaṇa story which he had gone to listen. When he is faced with the most difficult problem of his life he does not lose heart but bravely faces it. He agrees to part company with his parents.

The last verse spoken by him tells the general truth of society :

आवासयन्तु पितरः पृथगेव नव्यौ जायापती कमपि कालमशुक्ततायै ।

स्वश्रूः स्तुषा च जननीव सुतेव चोभे स्यातां पुमांश्च तनयो दयितश्च भूयात् ॥¹

"Let parents settle the new husband and wife separately for some time for removal of bitterness. Let the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law be like mother and daughter. And let the male child endear himself."

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Enough has already been written on the language and the style of Y. Mahalinga Sastri in the context of the treatment of his humorous and mythological plays. To avoid repetition we would better restrict ourselves to the two plays under reference. The first of these, the *Markaṭamārdalikaḥ*, deals with, as has been said earlier, those characters in society who suffer from split personality. The author's depiction of this personality, alternating between good and evil; good outwardly but evil inwardly, is characterized by an intimate touch. The antics of the monkey, the symbolic representation of these characters, quite often excite laughter. Its speech too often forces smiles. The play has enough of an element of humour in it. This brings us to the question : Should this play on that score alone not have been included among *Prahasanas* or the humorous plays. The answer to this is emphatic no. The evidence of the author, how the author views his own work, should be an overriding consideration with any critic. Looking at it from this angle we find that the author specifically terms his work *Bhāṇa* which would on account of the predominance in it of *Śṛṅgāra* or *Vīra*, in the present instance of *Vīra*, preclude its being a *Prahasana* for that category of composition has *Hāsyā* or humour as its predominant sentiment. The present work is being treated under the social plays on account of the nature of its theme, a more important consideration with us for classifying the plays. It is the social theme that the author handles in the present work. Some people

1. Ibid., p. 55.

luring the unwary and the gullible and then bullying them is a common enough social phenomenon which the author brings into bold relief in his Markaṭamārdalikaḥ.

Just as with Markaṭamārdalikaḥ so with Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ. On the face of it, on account of the title it bears it appears a mythological play, a play based on the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa. But a study of it reveals it to be a social play pure and simple dealing as it does with the theme of the quarrels of a mother-in-law with a daughter-in-law, a common occurrence in Indian households. The play owes its name to the story of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa where mother Kaikeyī plays havoc on account of her foolishness with the happiness and the peace of the family. The hero of the play who goes to listen to the story (of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa) has the feeling that the Ayodhyākāṇḍa is being staged in his own house also by his mother who is out to destroy the family peace. The Ayodhyākāṇḍa thus becomes symbolic of the motherly haughtiness, a tendency to find fault with the daughter-in-law, to nag her, to boss over her. The author therefore picks up this very term as the title for his work which purports to pinpoint this tendency.

Reverting to the Markaṭamārdalikaḥ we find that in line with the style of the Bhāṇas which describe the character of rogues the author in his Markaṭamārdalikaḥ too introduces a rogue in the form of the monkey. The very difference in its style of speech when making an offer and when reprimanding as something goes wrong cannot but leave a deep impress on the minds of the readers. When offering oil pitcher to the old woman the monkey says :

किं भणसि 'आयुष्मान् भूयाः, भद्राणि पश्य' इति । प्रतिग्रहीतास्ते आशिषः ।
परोपकारपरायणं मे जन्माद्यैव कृतार्थं भवति । एतत्तैलभाण्डम् । स्वीकरोत्वत्तिका
(क्षणं विश्राम्यति) ।

"What do you say, 'May you live long, find auspicious things, I accept your blessings. My life given to others' good is fruitful this very day itself. This is an oil vessel. The elder sister may (kindly) accept it. (*Rests for a while*)."

On a comparative analysis of the Markaṭamārdalikaḥ and the Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ one thing that stands out is that while both of these are one act plays, the theme is more sustained and steady in the latter than in the former. Markaṭamārdalikaḥ written as a monologue after the style of the Bhāṇas turns out in reality a catalogue of quickly happening events, which actually

are recapitulated by the author in two verses at the end, something that detracts not a little from the effectiveness of the play :

बालं विहायच्छुरिकोपलब्धा
निस्त्रिंशमूल्यं पिटको गृहीतः ।
पिटस्य नाशे वृषभावुपात्तो
तयोः प्रहाणेन घटः सतैलः ॥
टं ॥१

In no play should normally the moral of the story be actually stated. It should be left to be understood by the reader or spectator. It takes away not a little from the dramatic effect of it if it is done. This is what our author does not avoid. At the end of the Markaṭamārdalikaḥ he gives the moral in two verses :

नेता बली राजतेऽन्धे
लोके तमुच्छिद्य घूर्तः समिन्धे ।
सर्वः परद्रव्यलोलः
पूर्वं भवेच्चारुसंलापशीलः ।
दीनेषु दैन्यं निविष्टं
स्यात्साहसे श्रीर्हि सर्वत्र दृष्टम् ।
स्वार्थं स्वयं चेन्न मन्ता
कस्येतरस्य प्रसज्येत चिन्ता ॥

How could the author who calls himself the repository of deep understanding, गभीरायंघामा, and possessed of great intellect, उदारधीः, permit himself this indiscretion passes our comprehension.

In Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ however there is no such outspoken moral intrusion. Joint families have all along been a problem but somehow coexistence has gone on. They are now breaking up. The author has no tears to shed for it. He actually advocates it, though of course temporarily. Through Cārucandra, one of his characters, he expresses the hope : एवमपि नाम कञ्चि-

1. May be the playwright is inspired in the last line of his by the following verse of poet Ballala in the Bhojaprabandha which too has a jingle like it :

राज्याभिषेके मदविह्वलाया
हस्ताच्छ्रुतो हेमघटो युवत्याः ।
सोपानमार्गेषु करोति शब्दं
टं ॥

त्कालमनतिसान्निध्येन स्त्रीजनानां भृशायितं मिथोहृदयकालुष्यं प्रशाम्यतु ।¹

"May be by the absence of too much of proximity the accentuated mutual ill-will of the ladies may subside."

The author is adept in the use of expression which effectively portrays the mood of the speaker. Small sentences exude politeness as the monkey in the Markaṭamārdalikāḥ offers oil vessel to an old woman :

“किं भणसि ‘आयुष्मान् भूयाः, भद्राणि पश्य’ इति ।

प्रतिगृहीतास्ते आशिषः । परोपकारपरायणं मे जन्माद्यैव कृतार्थं भवति । एतत्तैल-
भाण्डम् । स्वीकरोत्वत्तिका ।

"What do you say, 'May you live long, find good things, I accept your blessings. My life given to the good of others finds fulfilment this very day itself. This is oil vessel. The elder sister may (kindly) accept it.' The quick succession of abuses that it (the monkey) hurls at the customers who partake of all the cakes, though of course at his bidding, brings into bold relief the split personality of the animal and affords us an insight into the working of its mind :

अरे दास्याः पुत्राः, किं पुनर्ददामि ? नावशेषयथ मह्यमेकामप्यपूपिकाम् ? अहमपि क्षुधितः ।
ननु भवन्तो भणथ 'कुतस्त्वमपि नाश्नासि' इति । अहो नु भोः, घस्मराः, उदरम्भरयः, स्वार्थपराः,
वडवाविशिष्टोदराः, वराकाः, किं पुनर्दद्याम् ? इदं वो दद्याम्, काष्ठं दद्याम्, अरं दद्याम्, गोमयपिण्डं
दद्याम्, सम्मार्जनीं दद्याम्, चपेटां दद्याम्, गलहस्तिकां दद्याम् । अपेत, विद्रवत, नश्यत, ध्वंसध्वम्,
पलायध्वम् ।

"O you wretches, what should I give ? Don't you leave even a single *apūpikā* for me ? I am also hungry. Well, you say, "Why don't you eat then." O you, selfish gluttons, you who consume (everything), you with a belly bigger than that of a mare, what should I give you? I will give you this. I will give you wood, I will give you spoke, I will give you cowdung cake, I will give you broom, I will give you slap, I will give you a catch by the throat. Go away, run away, come to naught, be destroyed, take to heels."

Similarly does the following dialogue in *Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ* (picked up by way of an illustration from among many like these) between the mother-in-law Śatahradā and the daughter-in-law Cārumatī beautifully portrays the strained relations between the two which very often involves them in wordy duel :

1. *Ayodhyākāṇḍaḥ*, p. 55.

शतह्रदा — अयि दुविदग्धे, दृष्टानि ते विजृम्भितानि । नूतनवित्तोन्मत्ता खलु । मातुल-
गृहविब्वोकहेवाकिनी खलु । अथवा कथं त्वमन्यथा भवसि ? यस्या गृहेऽस्मिन् संराज्ञीपदे मुकुटा-
मिषेकः क्रियते पुङ्गवैः ।¹

"Śatahradā : O you silly one. I have seen your exploits. You are indeed intoxicated with new wealth. You are given to the haughty indifference acquired from maternal uncle's house. Or else how would you be different, you who are crowned a queen in this house by the important menfolk."

सन्दीपनी — (साक्षेपरोषम्) किमेतैर्मुग्धाभाषितैर्निष्कारणदारुणैः । ... मा भूरि, अस्ति
निरवग्रहा जिह्वेति निर्मर्याद दुर्वचःकन्थाः प्रयन्ताम् ।²

It would thus be seen that Sri Y. Mahalinga Sastri excels in the delineation of situations in words that suit them; really a fine quality in a playwright.

1. Ayodhyakāṇḍah, p. 39.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

Miscellaneous Plays

Miscellaneous Plays

Mahimamayabhāratam

INTRODUCTORY

The play Mahimamayabhāratam is written by J.B. Chaudhuri. It has five acts and 20 pages. It is published from Pracyavani, Calcutta in 1960. All the scenes of this play are based on authentic sources, and as such, the play has a definite historical value.

PLOT

First act — After Nāndī, the stage manager and the actress discuss about the staging of a play. They decide to entertain the audience by showing a play which depicts the glory of India and the projects of irrigation.

The act proper begins by showing the glory of India in the Vedic age. The sage Sindhuksit with his wife offers oblations to the river Sindhu or Saptasindhu (the Sindhu with its tributaries). He invokes the river to give them prosperity and happiness so that every one should be satisfied. His wife asks about the significance of the name 'Saptasindhu'. The sage explains that all the rivers of India are collectively named as Saptasindhu. One of the disciples of Sindhuksit asks him about the real motive behind his worshipping the rivers. He explains to him that the rivers give them life in the form of water and so like the earth they are their mothers.

Second act — This act represents the Pauranic age. All the Rāgas and the Rāginīs are lying desolate. There is nobody to listen to them. Nārada comes. When he sees their pathetic condition he is moved to pity and tries to revive them. He requests Śiva to sing them. Viṣṇu and Brahmā listen to him. Śiva sings the Rāgas so melodiously that Viṣṇu begins to melt. Brahmā collects the molten Viṣṇu in his pot from which the holy Gaṅgā comes into being.

Third act — This act represents the Mohammedan age. The actual period, however, is that of Shahjahan. Shahjahan is in Lahore. His daughter Jahanara is waiting for him at the Red Fort. The river Yamunā is flowing just beside its walls. Its dark waters excite her imagination. She sings a song in praise of the river which has continued to serve mankind through the ages. Just at that time Shahjahan comes and gives her the happy news that Alimardan, the Governor of Lahore, has agreed to start a new River

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System for the benefit of mankind. She is very happy at this. She says that this scheme is actually the fulfilment of the dream of empress Mumtaz herself.

Fourth act — This act represents the modern age, especially the post-independent India. Ram and Rahim, the two labourers, who work on Maithon Dam discuss about the progress made on account of the efforts of patriots like Mahatma Gandhi. Four visitors, Pelava Kumar, Damodar, Sanatan and Manjula Devi come to see the Dam and speak highly of it.

Fifth act — The four visitors, with the help of Ram and Rahim have a good view of the Dam. These visitors actually represent the four classes of the Indian people. Pelava Kumar is a poet, Sanatan, an orthodox Brahmin, Damodar, a witty and humorous person and Manjula Devi, an ultra-modern girl. At the end of the fifth act is a song in which obeisance is paid to Mother India, whose heavenly beauty is spread out in various glorious forms in different seasons. With this the drama comes to an end.

CHARACTERIZATION

The present play depicts the progress made by India in all the four ages — the Vedic age, the Pauranic age, the Mohammedan age and the Modern age. Though there are many characters in it who are associated with the progress of India they all remain in the background; the main aim of the author being to show the stages of the progress through which India has passed. There is therefore no individual so important as to be singled out for characterization.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Enough has already been written on the language and the style of J.B. Chaudhuri. His works are written all on a pattern. The difference between this and the rest of his plays is that they are all biographical, it is this one which alone deals with a current problem of irrigation and therefore stands on a different footing. The author is a devotee at heart. This devotional aspect of his character makes itself manifest in the various praises of the rivers which dot the play. The author looks upon them as mothers. 'The river is only another form of mother' (मातुरेव सूर्यन्तरं नदी) says he. With great devotion he prays for their continuous flow :

आद्या सृष्टिविधातुर्जलमयवपुषो हे तटिन्यो जनन्यो
युष्माकं स्नेहसिक्तास्त्रिभुवनभवना जीवसङ्घा घ्नियन्ते ।

धारा यासामपापा व्यपनयति मलं वाग्वपुश्चेतसां न-
स्ता यूयं भारतेऽस्मिन् प्रवहत परितो ग्रामपुर्यादिसीमाम् ॥¹

"O, the mother rivers, you are the first creation of the creator with His form of water. Soaked in your affection the multitudes of beings in the three worlds sustain themselves. The rivers whose holy current removes the impurities of our speech, body and mind, you go on flowing along the banks (lit. borders) of the villages or the cities in the Bhārata."

As usual there is no continuity in the plays of J.B. Chaudhuri. Each scene constitutes an independent unit in itself. There is no cohesion or unity of time and place. Of course underlying them all is the praise of the rivers and their life-giving capacity. The author is fully conscious of the steps taken by our Govt. for the promotion of various irrigation and hydroelectric schemes :

सत्यं मन्ये बहुमुखी सर्वथाऽस्माकं जातीयसर्वकारपरिकल्पना । एकतो बहूद्देश्यमूलकसेचन-
परिकल्पना, विविधसेचनपरिकल्पना, विद्युदुत्पादनपरिकल्पना च ॥²

"True, many-sided, I know are the projects of our national government. On the one hand there are the multipurpose irrigation projects, the various irrigation channels and the hydroelectric projects."

But it is not all rivers and irrigation channels here. We meet with occasionally the tender side of life too. Shahjahan's love for his daughter has all the tenderness of the fatherly affection :

(अञ्जलिं वदध्वा स्वगतम्) आल्लाह् ?

अर्धाङ्गं वा ततो वाऽधिकमिह यदभूद् रत्नभूतं कलत्रं

तन्मे दुर्भागधेये विसदृशमिति किं त्वं मदङ्कादहर्षीः ।

आस्तां तद्, यातु शिष्टा मम हृदयवनोद्यानवल्लीमतल्ली

कन्येयं सा मदङ्के वसतु चिरमिति प्रार्थनेका तवान्ते ॥³

The author has the capacity to be quite expressive. When Nārada sees the pathetic condition of Rāgas and Rāginīs his heart is filled with sorrow. One of the Rāgas explains as to how mercilessly they were thrown on the roadside :

विगानाद् गानानां सुचिरमिह सामाजिकजनै-

नं रागा रागिण्यः प्रकृतिमुपगच्छन्ति सहजाम् ।

1. Fifth act, p. 4.
2. Fifth act, p. 16.
3. Third act, p. 10

दशा तस्मादेषा विकलकरणा नः समभवद्
वयं क्षिप्ताः सौघात् पथिरजसि दर्भाङ्कुरचित्ते ॥¹

The author adds charm to his play by including in it a number of melodious songs. Nārada requests Śiva to sing the Rāgas and the Rāginīs. Brahmā and Viṣṇu form the audience. What a rare combination of an artist and the audience! Here is the praise of Śrī Saṅgīta Sarasvatī by Śiva :

जीवनं गीतकं जीवनोज्जीवनं
चेतसो मङ्गलं तापसास्वादनम् ।
सर्वशान्तिप्रदं साधनासिद्धिदं
जीवताद् भूतले सन्ततं सेवितम् ॥
प्रज्ञा-ब्रह्म-पराकारा नाद-ब्रह्म-स्वरूपिणी ।
सङ्गीत-भारती भानु साऽस्तु कल्याणकारिणी ॥
ओङ्कारो ज्ञान-सङ्गीतसाधनापरमद्युतिः ।
अखिलं भुवनं व्याप्य तद् बहिश्च सदा स्थितः ॥
नादोऽनाहतरूपो यः शाश्वतः कालरञ्जकः ।
सा गीतभारती भूयाल्लोककल्याणकारिणी ॥²

1. Second act. p. 5.

2. Second act, p. 7.

Prakṛtisaundaryam

INTRODUCTORY

This drama is written by Medhavrata. He wrote it when he was only a young student in Gurukula. It consists of six acts.

The writer has described here the various aspects of nature. Probably his surroundings provided him with the impulse to go in for such a composition. It was originally written as a poem; it was only subsequently that it was given the form of a drama.

The various natural phenomena such as mountains, rivers, seasons, the sunset and sunrise bring out the poet in the writer who, though young, was possessed of a rare perception. Poetry came to him naturally though at times his similes, metaphors and other figures of speech lack appropriateness while his expression suffers from the unnecessary padding of words, even repetition, which detract not a little from the charm of the play. In spite of all this the overall effect that the play leaves on the mind of the critics is very good, perhaps better than the one left by some of the other contemporary plays.

PLOT

First act — Candramauli, the king of Kashmir, roams about in an aerial car (*vimāna*) with his friend Candravarṇa and enjoys natural beauty. After some time they alight from the *vimāna* and walk on foot to have a closer look at nature. They are mighty happy seeing the beautiful ponds here and there. It is afternoon when they enter a hermitage. The peaceful atmosphere of the hermitage leaves such a deep impression on the king that he wants to take to Vānaprastha. He tells Candravarṇa that after returning to his kingdom the first thing that he would do would be to crown his son Candraketu, as king and then return to this peaceful hermitage. They meet sage Munīndra who is in charge of the hermitage. Sage Munīndra wishes them well and takes them round the hermitage. Both are very much impressed by the beauty, calmness and serenity of the place and go back to their kingdom.

Second act — Vinayakumāra, a student of the hermitage, is enjoying the beauty of nature at the onset of autumn. His friend Jagadindu tells him

that today they are going to celebrate the festival of Vasantapañcamī and their teacher has asked them to go to see the beauty of nature, after finishing the sacrifice. All the Brahmācārins roam about happily and enjoy the beauty of nature. Some boys play ball. After enjoying so much they sit down and relax. A student named Ānandamūrti tells them that king Candramauli of Kashmir wants to put his son Candraketu on the throne. He also tells them that Candraketu is the ex-student of this very Gurukula and so the king has invited the Kulapati to attend the coronation ceremony. Prince Candraketu would himself come to take the Kulapati.

Third act— Prince Candraketu along with Vasucandra, the son of his minister, leaves for the hermitage on horse back. On the way they enjoy the season of summer. When they are near the hermitage Candraketu tells Vasucandra about the birds and animals of that place. When they reach the hermitage Candraketu meets the Kulapati and his dear friends Priyamitra and Deśamitra. Kulapati enquires about the welfare of king Candramauli and prepares for the journey for the next day. Candraketu is very happy to spend some time in the company of his old friends once again.

Fourth act— Prince Candraketu tells his friends the whole story as to how his father had come there to enjoy natural beauty and as to how in the pure and serene atmosphere (of the hermitage) he wanted to renounce everything and take to Vānaprastha. Now he (his father) has himself sent him (Candraketu) to bring the Kulapati with him. He also tells that after the rainy season he will be coronated.

Fifth act — After describing the rainy season the description of winter season is given in detail. Priyamitra tells Deśamitra that in a few days the ceremony of coronation of Candraketu would be possible for the winter season has set in. Candravarna comes and takes Candraketu, Vasucandra and the Kulapati by *vimāna* to the kingdom of Candramauli because the coronation ceremony is to take place the very next day.

Sixth act— King Candramauli asks his minister Mañicandra about the reaction the news of the coronation of Candraketu has produced among his subjects. 'Are people happy by the news of his taking over the reins of administration? Are they willing to accept him as their king?' asks he. Mañicandra tells him that the festivities in the country and the blooming faces of the citizens are an unmistakable evidence of their happiness. Meanwhile the attendant informs the arrival of the sage Munindra. The king is very happy

at this. He orders that he should be brought in to his presence with due courtesies. From the opposite side come Candravarna, Kulapati, Candraketu and Vasucandra. The prince is coronated with usual pomp and show. The drama ends with the utterance of the Bharatavākya by Candraketu.

CHARACTERIZATION

King Candramauli, heir apparent Candraketu, Munindra (the incharge of the hermitage) and the Kulapati of the Gurukula - all discharge their duties in the play fairly well.

Candramauli — Candramauli is an ideal king and an ideal father. Like Daśaratha he is conscious of his age and wants to shift the responsibility of the kingdom on to his son Candraketu. He wants to perform his (Candraketu's) coronation ceremony as early as possible and retire to the forest for meditation. He discloses this intention of his to his minister Candravarna when they enter into the hermitage :

जरसा दुर्वहां निजराज्यधुरं सकलराज्य-धूर्वह-धुरन्धरे विधिवदवसितब्रह्मचर्याश्रमे
कृताखिलशास्त्रपरिश्रमे प्रजापालनानुरञ्जनचतुरे क्षात्रघर्मनदीष्णे विनयोज्ज्वले
आत्मतनये चन्द्रकेतौ समारोप्य सम्प्रति वयं क्षत्रिय-कुलोचितेन विधिना अस्मि-
न्नेव तपोवने शेषं वयः सुखेन गमयितुमभिलषामः ।¹

"Now that we have grown old and are hardly able to bear the responsibilities of government we wish to spend the rest of our life comfortably in this very penance-grove according to the usual custom of the Kṣatriyas, after having entrusted the administration of our kingdom to our son Candraketu who is winsome (lit. bright) by his modesty. He is the foremost of all the rulers. He has completed his education in conformity with the prescribed rules and has assiduously studied all the *śāstras*. He is well versed in the duties of the Kṣatriyas and knows the art of pleasing and taking care of his subjects."

The king has full respect for the learned people who shape the life of his own children as well as the children of his subjects. His conviction is that with a happy and contented teacher nothing can go wrong in his kingdom. He says to the incharge of the hermitage :

राजा — भवादृशां जगन्मङ्गलवितीर्णैकदृशां दुरितशमनजागरूकाणां ज्ञानचक्षुषां तपस्विनां
प्रसादे समासादिते सति किममङ्गलं नः ।²

"What mishap can befall us when we have gained the favour of

1. First act, p. 22.

2. First act, p. 28.

ascetics like you who are solely intent on the welfare of the whole world, who possess the discerning eye of knowledge and who are wideawake in suppressing evil."

Candraketu — Prince Candraketu, like his father, is blessed with all the qualities of an ideal king. When the king asks his minister about the reaction of the subjects at the news of the coronation of Candraketu the minister reports :

देव ! किमुदीर्यताम्, देवस्य प्रकृत्या तैस्तैश्चाभिरामगुरौरनुगुणं विनयोज्ज्वलं
सुनयशालिनं सुतनयं स्वराज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यमाणं निशम्य प्रसीदन्तितरां प्रकृतिसरला-
स्तरलमतयः प्रकृतयः ।¹

"My lord, what is there to say ? Having heard that your worthy son, who takes after you in nature and all the other charming qualities, who is distinguished for his political wisdom and shines on account of his modesty is being crowned, your simpleminded and excited subjects are extremely happy."

Candraketu is an ideal son, an ideal student and an ideal colleague. When he comes for the second time to the hermitage where he spent his childhood he revives his old memories :

चन्द्रकेतुः (विमृश्य - सहर्षम्) सखे वसुचन्द्र !
बाल्ये यैरुषितं समं विहसितं प्रक्रीडितं लीलया
यैः साकं पठितं मुदा प्रलपितं प्रेम्णाऽशितं निद्रितम् ।
यैः साद्धं व्रतिना मया सनियमं संपालितं तद् व्रतं
तान् द्रष्टुं मम मानसं हि तरलं सोत्कण्ठितं वर्तते ॥²

"Candraketu (*pausing, cheerfully*), Vasucandra, my friend;

My restless mind longs to see those companions of mine with whom I lived in childhood, with whom I laughed, with whom I playfully engaged in many a prank, with whom I read and chatted happily, dined with fondness and retired to bed and yea with whom I faithfully followed the vow (of celibacy) as a religious student."

He assures his friends that he can never forget them though he may be crowned a king and live in luxurious palaces :

भद्रासनं समधिरोहतु वैष भद्रा-
वारुह्य सौघमघितिष्ठतु वैष तुङ्गम् ।

1. Sixth act, p. 106.

2. Third act, p. 59.

आबाल्यकालसुहृदां हृदयङ्गमानां
किं विस्मरिष्यति पुनर्त्रातिमण्डलीनाम् ॥¹

"O good ones, whether this Candraketu occupies the royal throne or lives in a high palace, can he ever forget that circle of loving ones who had taken a religious vow and who are his friends of the childhood?"

Other characters like Munīndra, the incharge of the hermitage and the Kulapati of the Gurukula, are also important ones. It is they who produce kings like Candramauli and his son Candraketu. They are the invisible force behind the king. The king cannot perform his duty unless he gets full support and help from the intellectuals.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

As the title suggests the drama mainly deals with the description of nature. As stated in the introduction the author had originally written it as a poem but later he gave it the form of a drama. In spite of this, poetic element in it is too prominent to escape the notice of critics. The play abounds in verses describing various seasons. It will be truer to say that the Prakṛtisaundaryam is more a dramatic poem than a drama. The incidents in it have all been subordinated to nature which has been described by the poet in all its minute details. It seems that nature to the poet is a beautiful damsel who dances before him in all her beauty and charm. The poet has tried to capture through words all the movements of the limbs of this dancer, the contours of her body, the gestures, the lineaments, the curves and folds. The Muse of the poet takes great delight in casting a glance at her, the searching glance, that would reveal everything of her to him. The present play thus makes a departure from the established practice of the Sanskrit dramas.

The author has a good mastery over the expression and command over prosody and rhetorics. There is a classical ring about his composition. His verses make a delightful reading. Who could have believed that the present play is the author's composition when he was just a young student? But then genius knows no limitations of age. The present case also reminds us of another parallel instance of that of Ambikadatta Vyasa, who wrote his masterpiece, the Sāmavataṁ, when he was barely seventeen.

We have in the play the description of all the seasons. First we take up the winter season. It is described here as the manager of the drama performed by nature, the actress :

1. Fourth act, p. 85.

जातोऽम्बरेऽम्बरमणी रजनीन्द्रतुल्यो
 वारीणि सान्द्रहिमजालशिलातलानि ।
 प्राणोऽपि जीवहरणः पवनोऽन्वयं य-
 न्मायाप्रपञ्चनवनाटकसूत्रधारः ॥¹

"The sun in the sky has become like the moon, the waters have frozen hard into slabs of ice and the wind too is taking the life out. This (winter) indeed is the stage-manager of the new drama, the manifestation of Māyā."

After winter, there is beautiful and charming spring. Nature prepares herself to welcome it:

नवकिसलयधारी शाखिसन्दोह एष
 विकसितकुसुमाली राजते वल्लरीणाम् ।
 अनुपमनवलक्ष्मीं नूनमेषा बिभर्ति
 वनततिरिति हन्त स्वागतोऽयं वसन्तः ॥²

"This grove of trees has grown fresh sprouts. Here shines the row of blooming flowers of the creepers. This forest range indeed is wearing peerless new look. Welcome is the spring season."

Autumn brings with it hot summer. Every one is uneasy. Candraketu describes the horrors of this (summer) season to his friend Vasucandra :

एषोऽम्बरेऽम्बरमणिर्नृमणी रणस्थो
 बाणावलीभिरिव तीक्ष्णगभस्तिजालैः ।
 भित्त्वा नृणामिव विपक्षनृणां वपूषि
 स्वेदाम्बुवृन्दमिव बाह्यतीव रक्तम् ॥³

"The sun in the sky having pierced the bodies of men with the mass of his scorching rays makes the streams of perspiration flow, in the same manner as does a king in the battlefield make the blood flow from the bodies of his foes by piercing them with the fusillade of his arrows."

The charming music of the rainy season following summer is worth enjoying :

तापापनोदनकृते कृतहर्षवर्षा
 वर्षानिटीह वियदङ्गनरङ्गमेत्य ।

1. First act, P. 23
2. Second act, p. 36.
3. Third act, p. 56.

उत्तुङ्गनीरदमृदङ्गनिनादभङ्गी-
सङ्गीतकं नु तनुते तडिदन्तनेत्रा ॥¹

"The rainy actress appearing here on the wide stage of the sky with her side-glances of lightning is performing music with the drums beating in the form of thundering (lit. lofty) clouds sending down delightful showers in order to remove the torment of heat."

After the rainy season there appears winter :

पतद्वलक्षच्छदपत्रिणां गरौ-
दिवं सितां स्मेरसरोरुहैर्भुवम् ।
सरित्सरोऽम्बून्यमलानि तन्वती
शरत् प्रसन्नेव विराजते पुरः ॥²

"Here we have autumn before us cheerful as if, turning everything white—the sky by the flocks of flying white-feather birds (swans etc.), the earth by the blooming white lotuses and the waters of the rivers and the lakes (by settling their impurities)."

Again we have the description of the Himālaya found in the following verse which is reproduced below for the delight of the readers :

नानाकान्तपतङ्गसङ्गिनमहो सर्वतु शर्मप्रदं
सौन्दर्यैकनिधेः सुकौशलमयं लालित्यलीलागृहम् ।
शैलेन्द्रं समवेक्ष्य सा समुचितं रत्नालयं स्वालयं
देवीयं प्रकृतिर्निसर्गरुचिरा नक्तन्दिवं दीव्यति ॥³

"The Nature Divine, inherently charming, is engaged in her playful activities day and night on seeing the lordly mountain, her own befitting residence, comforting in all seasons, a mine of precious stones, the mountain which is an artistic playhouse of the one store of beauty and is frequented by lovely birds of many kinds."

The description of rivers is very charming. They are described here as little children playing freely :

प्रोच्चाचलेन्द्रशिखरस्खलदम्बुधारा-
वेगान्महोन्नतशिलासु समुच्छलन्त्यः ।

1. Fourth act, pp. 74-75.
2. Fifth act, p. 92.
3. First act, p. 11.

डिण्डीरडम्बरविडम्बिजलं वमन्त्यः

क्रीडन्ति तातभवने किमु बाललीलाम् ॥¹

"(These rivers) on account of the speed of their streams of water rushing down the lofty peaks of the mountain, bounce on the mighty rocks jutting out and pour out water looking like the masses of foam. Are they playing like children in their parental home?"

Apart from the description of seasons there are descriptions of other aspects of nature too. As an illustration we reproduce below the description of the young one of a deer which is highly natural :

सारङ्गडिम्भो हिमपीडिताङ्गः

स्तन्यं जनन्या इह पातुकामः ।

दृढं मिथस्सम्पुटिताच्छदन्तं

व्यादातुमास्यं प्रभुरेव नासौ ॥²

"The young one of a deer with its limbs shrunken with cold though eager to suck the milk of its mother is unable to open its mouth, its bright teeth having been tightly locked up."

Another illustration is furnished by the following verse where we have the description of the natural laws; the inexorableness being imparted to them by the Lord, the Great Regulator :

भास्वानाक्रमते क्रमेण भगवानस्तं पुनर्गच्छति

प्रातस्सायमिमं क्रमं प्रतिदिनं ब्रह्मो निबध्नाति यत् ।

चन्द्रोऽयं परितो भुवं भ्रमति यद् वृद्धिक्षयौ दर्शयन्

नक्षत्रालिरियं यदेति नियमानां को नियन्तैव सः ॥³

"That the sun rises and sets successively; that it (the sun) follows this course daily morning and evening; that the moon goes round the earth showing waxing and waning and that the stars move; who is that Being who regulates all these laws?"

In one place the author describes nature in a different way. He imagines the shade of the trees to be a reporter :

यथा यथा गच्छति वारुणीं द्रुतं

तां पद्मिनीनां पतिरेष सेवितुम् ।

1. First act, p. 12.

2. First act, p. 26.

3. First act, pp. 7-8.

तदीयवातकिथनाय गम्यते

द्रुच्छायया पूर्वदिशे तथा तथा ॥

"As the sun, the lord of the lotus plants, proceeds with hurry to meet the western quarter with equal haste, the shade of the trees advances to the eastern quarter to tell it of this act of his."

The rivers appear like the *abhisārikās* :

नवजलदसुनीरैः पूरिता निर्भरिण्यो

विहितपुलिनभङ्गा उद्धतास्तास्तरुण्यः ।

नवजलधरकाले सङ्गमोत्कास्तरन्ति

जलनिधिपतिमेता दर्शितावर्तभङ्ग्यः ॥²

"On the approach of the rainy season these rivers, the impetuous young damsels, move on to the ocean, their husband. They are eager for union. They are filled with the waters of fresh clouds. They have corroded the banks and exposed their eddies, their navels."

The author has a passion for metaphor (*rūpaka*). As an illustration we quote the following :

परिभ्रमद्भृङ्गसुशब्दगीतयः

प्रफुल्लपुष्पद्विजराजिकान्तयः ।

चलन्मनोहारिसुपाणिपल्लवा

लसन्ति कान्ता विपिने लतालयः ॥³

"These rows of creepers in the forest appear like lovely women, with the humming of the hovering bees for their sweet songs, with blooming flowers for the beautiful rows of their teeth and with the shaking and lovely tender leaves for their hands."

The grandeur and beauty of the city is worth enjoying at the time of the coronation of Candraketu. This description is very vivid and charming :

ववचिच्चारुहासिनीनां सुवासिनीनां श्रुतिमञ्जुला मङ्गलगीतयः, क्वचिद् ब्रह्मविदां ब्राह्मणानां पुण्या ब्रह्मनादाः, क्वचिन्मृदङ्गानां निनादाः, क्वचिद् रणन्तीनां विपञ्चीनां पञ्चमरागभङ्गतरङ्गाः, पथि पथि केतकवासवासितवाससां मनोहरवेषजुषां पुरवासिनां सञ्चारः, चत्वरे चत्वरे निगमोपदेशामृतवर्षिणां साधूनां सदुपदेशाः, गृहे गृहे होमहुतसुगन्धिद्रव्याणां सुगन्धाः, प्रत्यङ्गणं रम्भास्तम्भदलकन्दलाः, प्रतिस्तम्भमाम्रकिसलय आलम्बिताः, प्रतिद्वारं कुसुममालिकाः, एवं प्रभूत-

1. Third act, p. 59.

2. Fourth act, p. 77.

3. Second act, 41.

प्रमोदपूरूप्रितान्तःकरणैः पौरगणैः समलङ्कृताखिलेयं राजधानी ।¹

At some places are heard the sweet and auspicious songs, pleasant to the ear, of sweet-smiling brides; at some, the svasti *mantras* chanted by the Brāhmanas well versed in the Vedas; at others, beats of tabors and at still others the strains of the resounding (strings of) lutes in the fifth note as the principal one. On every path are walking the charmingly-dressed citizens whose clothes are perfumed with the scent of Ketaka. At every square pious men are delivering holy sermons showering the nectar of Vedic teachings. From every house there arises the sweet smell of odorous oblations offered in sacrifice. In every courtyard there are pillar-like plantain trees with their leaves and shoots. On every pillar are hung the tender mango leaves. On every door are suspended garlands. In this manner the entire capital city is adorned with citizens whose minds are overflowing with joy.

The play is generally written in the *Gauḍī* style with its long and difficult compounds which are found even in prose. A couple of examples would suffice to prove the point :

देव, नूनमावां बहुलहिमकुलसङ्कुलारण्यपुण्यभूखण्डस्य परस्सहस्रनिस्सरदमलशीतलतरजल-
निर्झरपरिवृतोत्तुङ्गशृङ्गस्य हिमालयस्योपरि वर्तावहे ।²

Now my lord, we are surely on the Himālaya, the holy region in which the forests are covered with thick coats of snow, whose lofty peaks abound in thousands of such springs from where clear icy cold water is coming.

अये नमितनिखिलनृपतिमण्डलमौलिमाणिक्यप्रभाप्रभासितसितचरणकमलयुगलः सकलोद्धता-
रातिमतङ्गजपुञ्जपञ्चाननश्चन्द्रवंशदीपको राजा चन्द्रमौलिः ।³

"Here is king Candramauli whose lotus like fair feet are illumined with the lustre of the crest jewels on the crowns of all the kings making obeisance. He is a lion for the herd of elephants of all his haughty foes. He is the light of the Lunar race,"

1. Sixth act, 107.

2. First act, 11.

3. Third act, 62.

Pratāparudravijayaḥ

INTRODUCTORY

The play Pratāparudravijayaḥ or Vidyānāthaviḍambanam is written by Dr. V. Raghavan and is published by Punarvasu, Madras in 1969. It is a parody in four acts on Pratāparudrayaśobhūṣaṇam or briefly the Pratāparudriyam of Vidyānātha. It has 31 pages.

PLOT

First act—The play opens up with a dialogue between two citizens of the Kākatīya capital Ekaśilā. Pratāparudra starts out on a victory expedition. The clouds of dust raised by the marching forces soar up to the heavens obscuring the sun and its lustre. The very earth seems to be rising up to the heavens. The sun being thus obscured, darkness sets in too early, upsetting the daily routine of everybody. Brāhmaṇas, who have just had their midday meal, hasten to perform their evening Sandhyā. Women start doing their evening toilette before time, birds flying back to their nests too early and bats and owls moving, and the temple priest, anxious to partake of the offerings, welcomes the untimely darkness and is hurrying up the evening worship of the deity. The dust has reached heaven and Indra and Śacī talk about it. The waters of the celestial Gaṅgā are rendered muddy with the dust raised by the marching army. In heaven also, the evening has come too early. Madana is not able to collect the evening flowers, his weapons. Indra enters the Nandana wood with Śacī. Dust gets into the eyes of the latter and into the thousand eyes of the former. Blinded by dust Śacī falls into a swimming pool.

Second act—There is a forest belonging to an enemy king who has been driven out of his kingdom by Pratāparudra and where the deposed kings have taken refuge depriving even Yogins of their usual diet of wild fruits and roots. A sylvan deity enters and describes the distress of the cattle and the deer. A friend of the sylvan deity gives the information that all this change is due to the prowess of Pratāparudra. They are joined by the deity of Nandana. She deploras the effects in heaven of Pratāparudra's victory expedition, the particular distress of Indra and the efforts of the Aśvins, moon and others to relieve it and their futility. Suddenly hot winds blow which is explained as due to the hot sighs of the deposed enemy kings and their wives. Indra in

distress, attended upon by the Aśvins and others, is introduced. A spy comes and informs that when heaven was thus enveloped with dust and darkness, the demons emerged and carried away Śacī as ransom. Then enters darkness itself and the whole of Amarāvati is plunged in it. Indra consults Bṛhaspati who admits his helplessness. Suddenly, the king of the demons enters, leading his demon army against the heaven and the gods.

Third act—Mātali, Indra's charioteer is thinking of fetching God Śiva in order to save heaven and the gods. Nārada, returning from a visit to God Śiva, conveys the latter's message that Pratāparudra, his great devotee, should be brought from the earth in order to save the situation in heaven. The king can be found at that time, in that mountainous region which is warm with his valour and cool with his glory, where both the padma and the kuvalaya bloom at the same time and where both the Sun-stone and the Moon-stone are to be seen, the former blazing and the latter melting. Enter two gods hiding somewhere in the despoiled Nandana wood. They are joined by a third who describes the condition of Amarāvati after its invasion by the demons. Suddenly a brilliant light appears. It is somebody coming up to heaven from the earth in Indra's chariot driven by Mātali. Nārada informs that it is now other than Pratāparudra who will destroy the demons and restore Amarāvati to its former glory. When they arrive, Pratāparudra first greets Nārada and goes on to where the forces of the demons are. When, with his tremendous lustre, he approaches Amarāvati, all the demons are automatically destroyed. Pratāparudra is, indeed, God Rudra himself.

Fourth act—Mātali, while rejoicing at the destruction of the demons, deplors that some of the eyes of Indra have lost their vision due to gazing at the dazzling lustre (*Pratāpa*) of Pratāparudra. No cure has been found. The Aśvins are helpless. Even the cool soothing light of the moon is not sufficient. Something more powerful is needed. Suddenly there appears an unheard of whiteness, like that of a special moonlight. Now enters an alarmed Siddha and he announces that the flood of Dissolution is spreading everywhere, engulfing everything. Others, equally alarmed, rush in and confirm the news. It is the cool whiteness of the glory (*kīrti*) of Pratāparudra which is spreading everywhere resembling floods of the milk ocean. Entering the interior of everyone of the thousand, it cures the ailment in the eyes of Indra. Now come Śiva and Pārvatī with Nārada. They are going to Amarāvati. Every one follows them. They arrive where Indra and Pratāparudra are together. Indra rejoices over the

the restoration of the glory of Amarāvati but cannot understand as to how the dust, the darkness and finally the unique whiteness like that of an ordinary moonlight came into being. Indra and Pratāparudra greet god Śiva and the others (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Nārada). Śiva addresses the assembly of the gods and informs them that all that has happened is due to the prowess of Pratāparudra. A celestial voice announces that Pratāparudra will enjoy the lordship of heaven together with Indra. An apparently alarming redness now spreads everywhere but it is nothing else than the love (*anurāga*) for Pratāparudra of the celestial nymphs, captivated by his glory (*kīrti*). Śiva now announces the coronation of Pratāparudra and asks him to share Indra's throne. From His own head he pours *Gaṅgā* water on Pratāparudra's head. Musical instruments are played and flowers showered on his head. The celestial nymphs dance. Śiva calls upon Brahmā to pronounce the benediction ; but words do not come out of Brahmā's mouth ; Sarasvatī is not there, she has gone elsewhere ! So Śiva thinks of the poet Vidyānātha, to whom she has gone, and he appears at once, Śiva extols him. Vidyānātha comes forward and pronounces the benediction in a loud voice.

CHARACTERIZATION

The play being a parody on the work of Vidyānātha there was little scope of originality in characterization. The entire story hinges round one character, Pratāparudra, the king of Ekaśilā. Other characters like Indra, Śacī, Bṛhaspati, Nārada, the gods and the demons are introduced only to glorify his character. Pratāparudra is brave, generous, chivalrous, in short, he is Rudra himself.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

The *Pratāparudrayasobhūṣaṇam* or briefly the *Pratāparudīyam* of Vidyānātha is a work on the *Alaṅkāraśāstra*, belonging to the early part of the fourteenth century A. D. The peculiarity of this work is that the author illustrates every concept and technical point in poetics and dramaturgy by his own verses glorifying his patron king Pratāparudra, of the Kākatīya dynasty of Warangal, called Ekaśilā in Sanskrit, in Andhra. Though the work has the merit of being a complete and comprehensive treatise dealing with the whole field of both poetics and dramaturgy, the student and the teacher soon tire of it because of the extreme monotony of the illustrations which sing the praise, in a conventional and exaggerated manner, of the same individual, the author's patron Pratāparudra, the local king. Included in the Pratāpa-

rudrīyam and given as a point by point illustration of the rules relating to a drama is a play in five acts called *Pratāparudrakalyāṇam*, the marriage of Pratāparudra. It depicts the victory expedition (*digvijaya*) which the young prince takes out to conquer the world. He marches forth in the four directions and the countries mentioned as having been conquered by him are Kalinga, Pāṇḍya, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Mālava, Cola, Kāśmīra, Nepāla, Suhma, Kamboja, Sevana, Gauḍa, Lāṭa, Siṃhala, Karṇāṭa, Bhoja, Kerala, Pāñcāla and Kīkaṭa. On his return after this world conquest he is crowned as king, his marriage (*kalyāṇa*) with the Earth, Vasumatī, being thus celebrated.

It is but natural that such a grossly exaggerated piece of eulogy, unrelated to reality, should provoke a parody and it was Dr. Raghavan who was inspired to write it. His work in four acts, the *Pratāparudravijayaḥ*, is otherwise called *Vidyānāthaviḍambanam*, Parody of Vidyānātha. It is an extension of the exaggerations, hyperboles and conceits indulged in by Vidyānātha in his illustrative verses and the panegyrical drama. The story is a continuation in the same trend as seen in the original of Vidyānātha.

The plot of the play given above affords us an idea of the conceits and hyperboles in Vidyānātha's own style, with which the author works out his parody. They show the author's (Dr. Raghavan's) deep and complete saturation with Vidyānātha's work and with the conventions that hold sway over later Sanskrit *kāvya* literature. Out-Heroding Herod, he says, in one of his verses here: While Śiva burnt Kāma with his third eye and Tripura with his smile, the mere approach of Pratāparudra was enough to reduce all demons to ashes :

अस्मिन् पुनरुपगच्छत्यपि भस्मीभवति दानवव्रातः ।¹

As the play proceeds, Dr. Raghavan displays all the familiar devices of the Sanskrit poet. Where necessary, he knows how to match sound with sense. As an instance we may mention below the verse where the rising masses of dust thrown up by the marching army of Pratāparudra creating an illusion of massive clouds is described :

कल्पकृन्मोच्छलन्मूर्च्छत्स्फूर्जथुस्फोटिदित्ताः ।

अभ्रं भ्राम्यन्ति किन्त्वभ्राः पुष्करावर्तकादयः ॥²

Quite well constructed and made up of lively words is the following stanza in the form of questions and answers between Rudra and Śacī surprised and

1. P. 24.

2. p. 3.

shocked by the sudden changes wrought in heaven by the clouds of dust raised by Pratāparudra's army :

किं ते पौलोमि दुःखं ? प्रिय किमिति परं म्लायते कल्पवृक्षैः

मा भूदस्माद्विषादः कुवलयसरसीमेहि संभावयावः ।

किं वा तत्राह्नि ? मुग्धे विकसितसुषमैवाद्य सा चित्रमेतत्

चित्रं किं त्यागिवीरक्षितिपतियशसा प्लाव्यते सर्वलोकः ॥¹

"O Paulomī, what troubles you ? Dear, why are the desire-yielding trees withering ? Don't be sad on this score. Come let us visit the pond. What is there by the day ? You simple-minded, it is a wonder that it is in full bloom. What is there to wonder at that the entire world is being flooded by the fame of the king, generous and valorous."

In the preface to the work Dr. Raghavan gives the *raison d'etra* of its composition. It was the reaction against the poetry of Vidyānātha where-in had been worked the stock-in-trade of the medieval Sanskrit poets : their description of the victorious military expedition, the bright or red prowess, the pure or white fame, the sorrow or the darkness of the vanquished kings and their harem, huge clouds of dust, the deafening noise of wardrums, horses, elephants etc. *ad nauseam*. Even while studying Vidyānātha's work prescribed as text in Sanskrit Honours M. A. Course in Madras Dr. Raghavan had composed and jotted a number of verses parodying those in the text. It was in 1931 that he wrote the present play for he had the feeling all along that the verses he had composed earlier in his younger years were not adequate to emphasize the nature of the later decadent court poetry in its stereotyped figures and fancies. He adopted the technique of extending further in his play the stock Rūpakas, Parīṇāmas, Bhrāntimāṇs, Utprekṣās, Atīśayoktis and Atyuktis and to make the imaginary world called up by these figures of poetry into actual facts, i. e, to put in the technical language of Poetics, to make the *kavipraudhoktimātranīṣpannavastu* into a *lokasiddhāvastu* and to work out the consequences of the same into a humorous theme. Though written as a parody the work shows sufficient originality of the author. The poet in him not unoften manifests himself. Some of his similes and images are quite charming and go straight into the heart. Even some of the older oft-mentioned comparisons and similarities receive from his hands an artistic touch which cannot but captivate the minds of the connoisseurs. As

an instance we may mention the following stanza where Indra invites Śacī to sit with him under a mango tree round which winds a creeper which with its flowers in bloom, bumble-bees buzzing around, leaves shaking in the wind and laden with fruit resembles his beloved with her radiant face, black eyes, long tresses, quivering in the breeze and full bosom :

कान्ते फुल्लमुखांबुजे कुसुमितां, नीलेक्षणे सालिकाम्,

आलोलायतकुन्तलेऽनिलसमाधूतप्रतानव्रजाम् ।

वक्षोभारनते फलावनमिताम्, आलिंग्य मामेह्यमुं

चूताश्लेषवतीं व्रजेव लतिकां शोभां तवाबिभ्रतीम् ॥¹

The author is at home in short idiomatic sentences as in long compounds with their dignified and majestic gait in recitation. The first two long lines in the following verse make up just one long *Samāsa*.

आरत्नाञ्चितभित्तिबिम्बिततनुस्वर्वारवामेक्षणा-

दोरान्दोलितचामरानिलचलच्छैवाललोमावलिः ॥²

In contrast to this is the first stanza uttered by the celestial voice :

दुकूलन्त्याशा आभरणति च तारावलिरियं

नभोगङ्गा माला व्यजनममृतांशुर्वियदपि ।

वितानं चास्थानं त्रिभुवनमहो दिग्वसनवत्

यशोराजान्ध्रेशो, मिलितमथवा कोटियुगलम् ॥³

because it is made up of short self-sufficient phrases in which there is a harmonious combination of nouns and verbs. To misunderstand the speaker's meaning by hearing the first word only and by not having in one's agitation, the patience to listen to the whole sentence and consequently throwing oneself into a flurry is a device often used by Sanskrit poets. Indra's state of mind after the loss of Śacī and the absence of any news about her gives the author an opportunity to use this method with great effectiveness in describing the interview between Indra and a spy in the presence of Brhaspati :

(ससंभ्रमं प्रविश्य चरः)

चरः — निवेद्यतां निवेद्यतां नाकलोकनाथाय वार्ताहर उपायात इति ।

काञ्चु० — बान्धुम्, तथा । (इति महेन्द्रमुपसृत्य) स्वामिन् । चरः कश्चिदुपायातः ।

1. P. 6.

2. P. 20.

3. P. 28.

बृहस्पतिः — तदविलम्बं प्रवेशयैनम् ।

काञ्चु० — आर्य ! तथा । (इति गत्वा चरं प्रवेश्य) अयं स्वामी, उपसर्पतु भवान् ।

चरः — जयतु महेन्द्रः

बृह० — जिष्णो ! पौलोमी — (इत्यर्घोक्ते)

इन्द्रः — आः ! प्रिये, आलिङ्ग माम् ! हन्त ! कथं न पश्यामि ताम् ।

बृह० — शचीपते ! पौलोमीवार्ताहरः प्राप्त इति मया वक्तुमुपक्रान्तम् ।¹

“(The spy entering with a flurry)

Spy — Report it to the lord of heaven that a spy has come.

Chamberlain — O.K. So will it be. (*Approaching Mahendra*) Sir, some spy has come.

Brhaspati — Usher him in quickly.

Chamberlain — Allright noble one. (*Going and ushering the messenger*) Here is the lord. You meet him.

Spy — Victory to Mahendra !

Brhaspati — Indra, Paulomī (*having half uttered*)

Indra — Ah, darling, embrace me. Well, how is it that I don't see her. ?

Brhaspati — Lord of Śacī, I was about to say that a person bringing Paulomī's news has come.”

When the occasion arises, Dr. Raghavan can so fashion a stanza that cannot only suit the context but can also serve the purpose of *subhāṣita*, that can be used at all times, as for example,

पुरुषविशेषज्ञानात् पामरसमजेन कीर्त्यते श्लाघा ।

रसिकसमाजस्य परं श्लाघाया उज्ज्वलो गुणो हेतुः ॥²

All this has been possible because the author has combined, with a great deal of imagination, the motifs and conventions in which the vast Sanskrit literature abounds. His mastery over the technical side of a *kāvya* is obvious at every step. While he observes, on the whole, the rules laid down by Bharata and his successors in regard to drama, he does not do so slavishly. The play is not sought to be brought under any of the recognized kinds of drama and is designated simply as a *rūpaka*, a dramatic representation (hence its inclusion among miscellaneous plays).

Another technical aspect of a *kāvya* is the metre in which the stanzas are composed. Here Dr. Raghavan displays not merely variety but also a fine sense of appropriateness. Awe-inspiring subjects are described in long

1. P. 13.

2. P. 2.

metres having a stately and dignified march in recitation while objects of a more homely nature are depicted in shorter metres, producing thereby a relaxation. They are altogether forty-seven stanzas in the comparatively short play. The metres used range from the simple Anuṣṭubh and Āryā, through Indravajrā, Hariṇī, Vasantatilaka, Prabarṣiṇī, Śikhariṇī, Viyoginī Śālinī, Bhujāṅgaprayāta, Mandākrāntā and Śārdūlavikrīḍita right up to Sragdharā with its twenty-one syllables to a foot. The rhythm of everyone of these metres is well preserved and they read excellently well.

Now a word about the humour in the play. Because it is a parody it has no dearth of it. On account of the hyperboles and the excesses in which it, like the original, indulges makes it thoroughly enjoyable. Dust raised by Pratāparudra's army entering in the ten thousand eyes of Indra giving him terrible pain and his cursing of them for that (एतावत्काल-मेकपद एव सर्वास्वपि दिक्षु जसन्तीः स्वर्वारवामेक्षणा अनुभूय सहस्रलोचनदानाय महर्षि प्रतिपदं वन्दमानोऽभवम् । हा धिक् ! कुटिलाशयान् मुनीन् ! अद्य पश्यामि, गौतमस्य दृष्टिकोटित्यम् ! अन्तःप्रविष्टरेणूनि अक्षीणि मे पुरुषुरायन्ते, हन्त पुरुषुरायन्ते ¹⁾ and Śacī's fall in a pond due to the loss of vision and its turing into mud (हा कथं क्षणात् सरोऽपि चुलुकिता-म्भः कर्दमप्रायं जातम्....कथमुत्तिष्ठेयम्) ²⁾ cannot but force smiles on the faces of the readers. So does the conversation of the three gods hiding in a corner of the Nandana out of the fear of the demons.

All this is very creditable indeed, especially when we remember that though published only now, the play was written long ago when the author was still a youth having just graduated from the University. Dr. Raghavan has had a very successful career of research as his many publications testify. But behind the *vidvān*, there was always the *kavi* waiting to be fully revealed. The author seems to have been conscious of it too, though he preferred to develop at first the other side of his talents. On reading the present play, after having read earlier some of his other creative writings as distinct from his critical work, one feels that he may have really received the special blessings of Sarasvatī, as expressed by himself in the following words :

वत्सक ! वचस्ते पूर्णमासीसुधा-

भानूत्तालितफेनिलाग्निलहरीकोलाहलं जृम्भताम् ।³

1. P. 8.

2. Ibid.

3. P. 2. The treatment of the play is generally based on the Foreword of Prof. K.A.S. Iyer and the author's own Preface to the play.

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ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	CORRECT	INCORRECT
22	23	Maharshi	Maharsi
43	5	of crosscurrents	o crosscurrents
43	21	incidents	incident
60	12	he has thrown light	he has.....light
84	13	Bengal	Bangal
98	14	thickly populated	thicklypopulated
105	21	Shaktisingh	Shakisingh
120	10	Dikshit	Diksit
189	27	sought	saught
211	22	(घ) तस्मात् कन्दर्पं दर्पं परिहर । ⁶	तस्मात् कन्दर्पं दर्पं परिहर ।
218	2	Vasistha	Visistha
224	3	sought	saught
225	25	असूर्या	असूर्या
226	1	सर्वे	सर्व
232	34	repentant	repentent
233	5	repentance	repentence
234	27	repentance	repentence
238	3	Priyamvadā know	Priyamvadāknow
245	2	Madanābhirāma	Madanābhirāmā
247	30	fighting	fighting
271	26	Footnote 5	
279	2	एव	एव
286	21	enjoy	injoy
293	11	here and there	here and here
309	13	denouement	denouement
319	31	Footnote 3	
320	1	As an instance	As in instance
324	Heading	Rāsalilā	Rasalilā

AIN	337	12	sought	saught
1.	337	18	plebiscite	plebicate
2.	339	19	ridicule	redicule
3.	350	15	राणाप्रतापप्रभृतीन्	राणाप्रतापप्रभृतीन्
F.	358	31	stereotyped	steriotyped
AGE	368	12	Footnote 10	
1	373	13	विवाहसम्बन्धं	विवाहसम्बन्धं
AST	391	3	a good husband	a good husb and
1	391	31	भवेत्तदातुमर्हसि	भवेत्तदातुमर्हसि
	396	15	a few cakes	a fewc akes
	397	6	naivete	naivette
	400	17	all right	allright

BHA

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